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THE Nation

NOVEMBER 10, 1956
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LETTERS

Socialists and Segregation

Dear Sirs: My attention has been called to an excerpt from an article by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois in the October 20 issue which reads: "In 1928, Negroes faced absolute dilemma. Neither Hoover nor Smith wanted the Negro vote and both publicly insulted us. I voted for Norman Thomas and the Socialists, although the Socialists had attempted to Jim Crow Negro members in the South."

I am glad to hear that Dr. Du Bois voted for me in 1928 although I had not known it. In 1929, when I asked his support in a mayoralty race, I remember he told me he couldn't support me because he had to support Jimmy Walker, since the latter had put lights on Lenox or Seventh Avenue and also, as I recall it, seen to it that there was one Negro intern at Harlem Hospital.

Dr. Du Bois is in error in saying "the Socialists had attempted to Jim Crow Negro members in the South." *Some* Socialists, I think, did, with whom I remonstrated most vigorously when I found out the situation. I refused to speak at segregated meetings in the South. I was one of the pioneers in the organization of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, now the National Agricultural Workers Union, which made integration a cardinal principle.

NORMAN THOMAS

New York City

The Konigsberg Case

Dear Sirs: Shall political tests be applied to an American citizen's right to earn a living? In the case of *Raphael Konigsberg v. The State Bar of California,* the Supreme Court—for the first time in its history, on such facts—will decide whether a person who has satisfied all statutory requirements for a license to practice law may be denied that license on the sole grounds of his alleged political opinions and associations.

The facts, briefly, are these: Raphael Konigsberg, an Army veteran, passed the California bar exams in 1953. The Committee of Bar Examiners refused to certify him for admission, declaring that he had not proved his "good moral character" because (1) he refused to answer questions about his alleged political views and associations (he based his refusal on the First Amendment); (2) the committee disapproved of the opinions he had expressed in a weekly column of political comment he wrote for *The California Eagle,* a Los Angeles newspaper; (3) he openly opposed the Tenney Committee (the California Un-American Committee).

There was no evidence introduced of any acts of a criminal nature (the traditional test before a bar committee for "good moral character"). Letters from forty outstanding doctors, lawyers, social workers, business men and others testified to Konigsberg's good character. Konigsberg produced a record of honorable service in the U. S. Army.

Konigsberg's position was that a person's opinions and associations have no bearing on his qualifications to practice law, and since the First Amendment is binding on the state as well as the federal government, California's Bar Examiners acted unconstitutionally in making his opinions a test of his right to earn a living as a lawyer.

Recognizing the historic significance of this case, the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Lawyers Guild are preparing amicus briefs for submission to the Supreme Court. The American Friends Service Committee's Rights of Conscience Program and Corliss Lamont's Bill of Rights Fund have granted support.

We call upon you to help meet the substantial court costs of this case. Send your contribution to me at 1434 Avon Park Terrace, Los Angeles 26.

ELEANOR C. RORICK
Treasurer, Konigsberg Legal Fund

Los Angeles, Calif.

Armistice Day

Dear Sirs: Is Armistice Day an empty holiday, cynically reminding us of what peace might mean? Or does it have substance as the beginning of a real world peace? There are some searching questions that may well be asked in this connection:

1. Can peace possibly be based indefinitely on a balance of terror, with growing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and increasingly ingenious devices for their delivery?

2. Would a shift in emphasis in foreign aid, from military to economic, be to the long range advantage of the United States, insofar as stability and eventual peace is concerned?

3. Do we not owe the children yet unborn the right to live in a world uncontaminated by poisonous substances created by man's own scientific genius?

Let us—particularly the women—devote our energies to perpetuate Armistice Day as a permanent institution dedicated to the premise that PEACE is both a possibility and a necessity.

JANET N. NEUMAN
Co-Chairman Public Relations
U. S. Section, Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom

Washington, D. C.

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EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

EDITORIAL

The Phoenix Pyre

War has exploded in the tinder box of the Middle East. At this writing it seems unlikely that it will last long or spread far, but even if the fighting has ended by the time you read this, we will have witnessed a major disaster. For the events of the last week brilliantly illuminate the moral bankruptcy to which a blind and slavish adherence to the discredited power politics of another age has brought the world at the end of the first post-war decade.

No itemization of the failures, defeats and reversals implicit in this debacle would be complete, but the following may be suggestive.

Must every new national power, as it emerges in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, learn to live with its neighbors only after it has fought with them? For the problem of Israeli-Egyptian relations there is, as Waldo Frank points out elsewhere in this issue (p. 382), no panacea; but the present war will not make it any easier to find a workable solution.

By the same token, are the older imperial powers incapable of learning *anything* from past follies? The recent behavior of France and Britain prompts the thought that old nations, like some old men, must have a final fling of folly and wickedness before they will accept the mandates of their own experience. Fortunately, it is a British citizen who has voiced the clearest and most forceful condemnation of Eden's "act of disastrous folly." This action, as Hugh Gaitskell pointed out in the Commons debate, involves "not only the abandonment of, but a positive assault upon, the principles which have governed British foreign policy for at any rate the last ten years" — solidarity with the Commonwealth, the Anglo-American alliance, and adherence "to the Charter of the United Nations." Mr. Gaitskell is quite right in saying that the British people will regret the tragic consequence of this act for years to come.

Equally distressing is the fact that Russia and the United States should have turned in performances so unworthy of two great powers in the plotting and counter-plotting out of which the Sinai conflict emerged. Washington's attempt to create a Middle East defense organization aimed at Russia was a piece of folly matched only by Moscow's reckless action in touching off an arms race in the dynamite-laden Middle East. New national states and old imperial powers may be expected to exhibit contrasting symptoms of the neurosis of nationalism, but the great, relatively "middle-aged" powers, each boasting a revolutionary tradition, have been the prize neurotics of the last decade. Meager power, insecurely rooted, will breed bellicose attitudes in much the same fashion that fading dreams of grandeur will produce hallucinations; but great power is supposed to foster wisdom and a sense of responsibility.

Even the neutral powers, some of whom managed to stay outside the exclusive military alliances, are not without fault. Some of them have encouraged the illusion of power which has entrapped Nasser; some have blinked at his less amiable qualities. A large section of world opinion, we suspect, is as thoroughly revolted by the "dynamic" myths and murderous missions of his brand of nationalism as it is with the idiocies of old-style imperialism.

FOR THE nations in the U.N. to have permitted the undeclared war between Egypt and Israel to continue for seven long years during which, as Ambassador Eban told the General Assembly, Israel had not for "one single moment enjoyed the minimal security which the U.N. Charter confers on member states," was to insure an explosion of the kind which has occurred. The U.N.'s responsibility is specific: its action created the State of Israel, its representatives negotiated the armistice. For seven years nothing was done to establish a peace on the basis of which large-scale social projects might have been undertaken which would have relieved some of the pressure building up in Egypt and the other Arab

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states. A blockade was tolerated; Egypt was even permitted to deny Israel access to the canal. To tolerate a situation in which neighbors, each armed, snarl and quarrel for seven years and then finally start shooting it out, is to make the policeman responsible for the explosion as well as the quarrel.

Israel, which owes its being as a national state to the action of the United Nations, has disappointed many of its friends by resorting to aggressive action. The severity of the provocation may be conceded; but the kindest judgment that can be passed is the President's statement that Israel's actions "have been taken in error." Britain and France, on the other hand, have committed a clear act of aggression and violated the principles of the United Nations without anything like the same degree of provocation that the Egyptians offered Israel.

BRITAIN and France were permanent members of the Security Council. They had taken the Suez issue to the U.N. and it was pending there when the ultimatum was served and the "police action" launched—without notice to this country. At the time, traffic was moving freely through the canal. The six-point statement issued earlier at the U.N. offered hope that an eventual solution might be found. The effect of the action was not to maintain the flow of traffic in the canal, but to close it. The action itself had been planned long prior to the Israel invasion. Clearly France and Britain were more concerned with the long-range consequences of Arab nationalism to their "vital interests" than with the issue of the canal per se or with Israel's unilateral action. At the General Assembly session, there was sympathy for Israel; there was none for France and Britain. The Australian and New Zealand spokesmen were unhappy apologists for a cause in which they did not believe, while India and Pakistan were critical and Canada abstained in the voting. In truth there was no defense; the case was air-tight. If Britain and France had any case, it was against Dulles. No doubt they reasoned that we would not intervene with arms to part Israel and Egypt either with or without U.N. auspices; therefore they must intervene to forestall a general holy war and to warn off the Soviets. But this is merely the frosting on the cake; fear of Arab nationalism is the substance of their unstated case.

THE paradox of this war, however, is that the very scope of the debacle holds hope for the future; a brilliant promise is implicit in the ruins.

For one thing, the military alliances of the cold war period are disintegrating. After 1945, a rickety scaffolding was constructed in fear and panic to sustain a precarious balance of power. The scaffolding consisted of proliferating military alliances, trade boycotts and the like, held together by the pressure of a steadily accelerating arms race. This structure of relationships is now collapsing. At best it was a makeshift affair, riddled with contradictions and certain to collapse at some point. Its costs were prohibitive and the benefits negligible. Even worse, the polarized struggle of the cold-war period prevented any creative initiative in diplomacy and deadlocked conferences with distressing regularity. The cold-war alliances, of course, have been a major hindrance to the effectiveness of the United Nations.

Now all this is changed. As Joseph C. Harsch points out in the *Christian Science Monitor*, "You can roll up the maps of the cold war."

Then, too, a momentuous implication is to be found in the news of the last few weeks. As the President has stated, "If the Soviet Union indeed faithfully acts upon its announced intention" — to withdraw troops from Eastern Europe — "the world will witness the greatest stride toward justice, trust and understanding among nations in our generation." What the President has done — and it is an act of statesmanship — is to invite the Soviets to resurvey the European situation in the light of this country's affirmative responses both to the developments in Eastern Europe and to the new policy which Russia has announced. His emphasis that this country has made "clear its readiness to assist economically the new and independent governments of these countries" and his assurance that economic assistance will be offered without any suggestion that we must first approve the form of society to which they adhere, should convince the Soviets of the soundness of their new approach. Within this framework, a solution to the German problem might be found. Similarly the disintegration of the blocs might make possible a degree of cooperation between the USSR and the USA which could transform the United Nations.

IT IS hard to understand those politicians who purport to see something sinister in the circumstance that the two great powers lined up in support of the U. S. resolution. The alignment on this issue was a good omen for the United Nations. It was a good omen, too, when the President said that he is "ever more convinced that the United Nations represents the soundest hope for peace in the world." After a decade of by-passing the United Nations and weakening it by military pacts and alliances, we now find ourselves freshly appraising it as the soundest possible structure within which to adjust great-and-small power relationships and to seek solutions for world problems. In the new world setting which has emerged at the end of a decade of cold war, the two great powers find that neither can dominate the "half" of the world in its orbit, much less dominate the other. Motivated by different reasons, both powers may now abandon the concept of the United Nations as a market place for protest and come to think of it as the only means

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through which their power can be safely channelled.

And it should be noted that the Israeli action, no matter how ill-advised, may in the long run force active great-power pressure to create the circumstances which might induce the Arabs to sit down with the Israelis and negotiate a lasting peace.

Time is clearly on the side of peace if this brush-fire war can be stamped out quickly. In a year's time the new super-tankers and Britain's experience with atomic power stations may place the Suez Canal issue in an entirely new perspective. And the events of the last six months may have convinced those who would play the role of Nasser that there are easier ways to secure funds for Aswan Dam projects than to stage tantrums.

In the manner of the Egyptian legend, a phoenix is being consumed in the flames of the Sinai pyre. The phoenix that is dying is a symbol of a world that is dying, a world of power politics, military alliances, gun-boat diplomacy, curt ultimatums, irresponsible aggressions, a world of national states dedicated to the mutually destructive proposition that war is the prime instrument of national policy. A new phoenix will arise from these ashes.

10 DAYS that shook the WORLD

The Counter-Revolution . . by MARK GAYN

OCTOBER, 1956, will surely join that other, more famous, October in the annals of communism. For if the October Revolution of 1917 marked the birth of the first Communist state, last month's events were a phase of the counter-revolution. What the world saw in the ten fateful days in Poland and Hungary were not *coups d'etat* in minor Communist states, but fragments of a vast counter-revolutionary movement which has already vitally affected Soviet influence and power, changed the nature of the relationships within the Communist bloc, and exposed a crisis of leadership in Moscow.

The counter-revolutionary process began even while Stalin was alive. For if he created the Red world as we know it today, and bound it together, he also set into motion forces of disintegration which he could neither foresee nor comprehend. The day he died, the last major obstacle before the counter-revolution was removed. For Stalin alone could hold the Red bloc together—through his immense prestige, his capacity to instill fear, even through the idolatry he made a part of life under communism. To hold the world of the October Revolution together, he reduced the Communist state, faith and loyalties to the irreducible symbol of himself. I shall not forget the icy-cold December day on which I joined thousands of Hungarians queued up for a look at the gifts Hungary was presenting to "the beloved father, teacher and leader" on one of his last birthday anniversaries. Hustled along by agents of the Secret Police, we saw a staggering display that ranged from a priceless set of hand-cut crystal to a collection of pipes for the greatest pipe smoker of them all. The people examined it all in silence, for here, clearly, were not ordinary birthday gifts, but a tribute—such as the people of Han once paid to the Mongol conquerors. Stalin needed none of these gifts, and probably saw them only hastily in the museum where they were installed. But he did require the fear and the symbolism which they implied.

It is not certain that, had he lived, Stalin himself could have coped with the new counter-revolutionary forces. It is certain that his heirs could not. They were astute men and capable managers, but they lacked Stalin's power. Thus, they engaged in a series of actions designed to hold the counter-revolution within bounds while they conducted a fateful reappraisal. The reins in satellite Europe were loosened slightly (and the East German workers promptly took advantage of it to produce the first outbreak of counter-revolutionary violence). The Secret Police everywhere were curbed, and an amnesty set free a hundred thousand political prisoners. The so-called "Malenkov Interlude" of 1953-54 dangled before Eastern Europe the promise of better pay, more consumer goods, a little more freedom for the writer and a little less repression in the villages. Such "traitors" of the Stalinist era as Traicho Kostov and Laszlo Rajk were rehabilitated, and such Stalinists as Cepicka, Bakosi and Chervenkov were dismissed. Finally, the Soviet leaders laid aside their pride, and journeyed to Belgrade with apologies and professions of love for Marshal Tito. Yugoslavia was not a great power, but it was an idea, and if the gap between Tito's communism and Khrushchev's could be bridged, perhaps the same formula could be used in readjusting the relationships within the Soviet bloc itself before the counter-revolution erupted.

The solution that Moscow apparently reached in 1953-54 was to loosen slightly the old bonds between Moscow and its satellites, to give the latter a measure of autonomy and retain tight control only over foreign affairs, defense and the overall economic planning. Yet, even this was not a fast and final decision. Any reader of the Soviet and satellite party organs in the past two years has had no trouble detecting the frequent changes of tone, from

MARK GAYN, veteran foreign correspondent, is the author of many books and articles on Eastern Europe.

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"hard" to "soft" and back again. It was one of such shifts of mood that saw Moscow, just a few months ago, address another of its famous "circular letters" to the satellite central committee, attacking Tito and reaffirming the Soviet Union's primacy. It was another change of mood that led Khrushchev to take his celebrated "vacation" with Tito this fall and Tito to fly to the Crimea on an equally puzzling "vacation."

Perhaps an even more important demonstration of the indecision in Moscow was the incredible speech Anastas Mikoyan delivered at the Communist Congress in Peking last September. The West either ignored the speech, or did not understand it. But what Mikoyan had in effect told the Chinese was not to stray too far from the path of Stalinist orthodoxy, not to talk too much of each Communist country following its own specific road, and not to pretend that the Chinese Communists could have triumphed had it not been for the increased might of the Soviet Union.

Mikoyan is perhaps the subtlest of the Moscow leaders, and he mixed his sharp sermon to the Chinese Communists with orchids for Mao Tse-tung. But there was no mistaking his theme, and if Khrushchev's complimentary speech in Peking in 1954 was interrupted by applause no less than eighty-one times, Mikoyan's was received with much less joy.

IN THE face of these constant shifts of emphasis, it was not unreasonable to assume that the Great Debate in Moscow was not over, and that there was disagreement on how to cope with the counter-revolutionary forces that were tearing apart the old monolithic unity of the Communist bloc. The champions of the "soft" approach might have conceivably been arguing that, with Stalin long dead and discredited, there was no way to reassert Moscow's total control over the other Communist states and parties. The advocates of the "hard" policy, on the other hand, might have been warning that if the reins were loosened any more, the horse would unseat the Red horseman. And it is not impossible that right at this moment there are some among the eleven men who rule the Soviet Union who already know that the counter-revolution and the process of disintegration are too far gone to be arrested now.

However essential it was for Soviet domestic reasons, Khrushchev's violent attack on Stalin last February became an important factor in the October counter-revolution. For with this savage indictment of the ways of governing and of the faith itself, the "people's democracies" now had every reason to seek out new paths. In Poland, for instance, the revolutionary ferment became unmistakable last March. The students, the writers and even the Communist press began to demand a greater freedom of expression. The Communist trade unions, whose only duty was to the party and not to the worker, found themselves in trouble with their members. The Secret Police put through a series of reorganizations, each more drastic than the one before. In May, Jacob Berman, the top Stalinist whose area of interest ranged from culture to police terror, found it advisable to retire. In June came the electrifying uprising in Poznan, which gave both Warsaw and Moscow notice that the counter-revolution was close to the surface. Yet, in July, Marshall Bulganin visited Warsaw to give a sharp and public spanking to the Polish party leadership and press for getting out of hand. And as the Polish leaders debated the shape of the Poznan trials, Wladislaw Gomulka was beginning to hatch his plot from his modest apartment in a Warsaw suburb.

NO ONE will ever know what Nikita Khrushchev expected to achieve by his dramatic flight to Warsaw on that Black Friday of October 19. Perhaps he thought he could impress Gomulka with the enormity of his defiance. Possibly he thought Gomulka might be frightened by the sight of the greatest Politbureau aggregation ever to journey abroad on a single mission (only Bulganin and Malenkov were left at home). Perhaps he hoped he could, in a face-to-face encounter, frighten Gomulka and his allies with the word of troop movements. Or perhaps the flight to Warsaw was what Gomulka and Edward Ochab apparently took it to be—an amazing demonstration of the confusion, desperation and near-panic that seized the Soviet leaders when they learned of Gomulka's imminent coup. But whatever the reason for their flight, the Russians failed. Even before the Ten Days were over, Moscow capitulated.

THROUGH the ten days that shook the Red world, the only people who knew next to nothing about the counter-revolution were the Soviet citizens. The crisis in Poland began on September 18, but the Soviet press had nothing on it until two days later. On that day, *Pravda* ran a brief and misleading communique on the Warsaw talks ("conducted in an atmosphere of party and friendly candor"), and a long and singularly venomous attack on the Polish press and, by implication, Polish leaders. Not a word was said about Rokossovsky's dismissal, and only the most assiduous Soviet reader could learn of it by matching the list of Polish Politbureau members who faced Khrushchev with a subsequent list of new Politbureau members. A full week had to elapse before *Pravda* finally published, with not a word of comment or explanation, the full text of an editorial in the Warsaw *Tribuna Ludu* and the abridged text of Gomulka's speech at a mass meeting. The two statements were worded in the usual jargon, and the spaces between the lines were so narrow that few Soviet readers could have detected in them the shape of the Polish counter-revolution.

Students demonstrating in Budapest at the outset of the Hungarian revolt cheered Gomulka's victory over the Russians. In Warsaw, thousands hailed the uprising of the ill-armed Hungarians against Soviet authority and tanks. The Russians alone were not permitted to know of the upheaval that affected their destinies so closely. What was Moscow afraid of, and was this yet another demonstration of the crisis of Soviet leadership?

The rollback of Soviet influence has been so rapid that it is no longer

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clear which East European country is a satellite, and which is not. Could a Poland that is demanding her own share of German reparations allegedly withheld by Moscow be still regarded as a satellite? And could any satellite think—as Hungary is doing—of installing a Catholic Cardinal as its prime minister?

TO understand the forces that compelled the Soviet Union to pull back in the eventful ten days, one must look at Eastern Europe as it was in mid-October. At that time satellite Europe embraced seven sharply differing components—from a backward Albania and agricultural Bulgaria to the highly industrialized Czechoslovakia. Yet, however they differed, they all bore the brand of Communist uniformity impressed on them by Stalin. This was true of puppet shows and economy, of bricklaying and the ways of governing.

But if the seven countries were made to look and think alike, Stalin made sure that none of them had any close contact with the other six. It was easier for a Hungarian to go to Italy than to Albania, and a Bulgarian could spend a lifetime waiting for a visa to cross the border into brotherly Rumania. The satellite governments exchanged careful courtesies; they remembered each other's anniversaries and traded art shows, but of physical contact between the neighboring peoples there was almost none.

One can only guess that the reason for this rigid compartmentalization was Stalin's fear that the East European countries might get together in some anti-Soviet move. But he apparently did not realize that by keeping the seven countries so rigidly apart, he was also helping to keep alive the spirit of nationalism within each. From personal observation, I can testify that these Communist-controlled countries hated and suspected their Red neighbors only a little less than they hated the Soviet Union. Some of the satellite countries, and especially Rumania, Hungary and East Germany, had particularly bitter memories of Soviet "liberation." These memories were never allowed to die, for the Russians managed to make their subsequent patronage and friendship offensive.

Moscow's commandment to "industrialize, industrialize and again industrialize" was applied to Eastern Europe without discrimination or economic sense. All the resources of each small country were brought close to exhaustion in the construction of a vast heavy industry. But the Soviet planners apparently never considered if the country's mineral resources, or manpower or know-how justified such an industry. The villages were drained of their manpower until there was a shortage of farmhands; instead of grain, the farmers now raised industrial crops, such as flax and cotton; and the draconic collectivization denied the tiller any incentive to work harder.

The results became apparent three years before Stalin's death. Yet, he persisted, and I recall, back in 1950, standing in a queue for hours for a small pat of butter in the same Hungary which once was Europe's chief provider of fats, or trying in vain to buy bread in a Bulgarian village. Since 1950, scarcity has been a way of life all along Eastern Europe—part of the price this region was paying for its industrialization and Stalin's folly.

BUT EVEN the new industry, built at such a cost, was ill-considered and ill-balanced. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland are studded with Stalin's "white elephants"—enormous plants for which no raw materials were available nearby, and whose steel or machines could compete in the world market only by exploiting the worker more and more and paying him less and less.

The great Sztalinvaros steel ombine in Hungary had no coking coal and no high-grade iron ore, and it had to import both from abroad. (It was originally laid close to the Yugoslav border, but, when Tito was proclaimed a traitor, the plant was moved, brick by brick, to a Danube swamp farther away from the border.) Some of the great Czech plants were hurriedly closed down after Stalin's death, for there was never any economic excuse for them. And the giant new steel mills of Poland hungered for the coal which the country was required to export to the Soviet Union at reduced prices.

To this burden in 1951 was added the weight of a new, vast and enormously wasteful munitions industry. By 1953, these plants brought Poland, for instance, to the brink of bankruptcy, but it was only this fall that Polish officials found the courage to admit it. And, inevitably, apace with this unbalanced economy there had appeared unemployment. In 1953-54, special "labor exchanges" had to be set up in Hungary to deal with the jobless thousands. And only a few months ago, Warsaw estimated Poland's unemployment at 500,000 and "hidden" unemployment (people in economically useless jobs) at 2,000,000 out of the total work force of 6,000,000.

THESE WERE all a legacy of the Stalinist era—fervent nationalism, and hatred of all things Soviet; inept planning that resulted in food shortages, a scarcity of consumer goods, unemployment and industrial "white elephants"; and, finally, police repression in forms so primitively cruel one had to go to the Middle Ages or the Middle East for anything to match them. And if the testimony of the countless nameless victims was not regarded as convincing, one only had to summon Janos Kador, today the First Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, and ask him to raise his hands. For the zealous men who arrested him some five years ago, pulled his nails off, one by one, to make his mind function with greater clarity.

Moscow's intelligence in Eastern Europe is superb, and the Soviet leaders are capable of a sober appraisal. Yet, such was the self-deception, or confidence, or even contempt for the satellite peoples that no Russian ever sensed the immense power of the resentments bubbling up just under the red surface. Since the October counter-revolution broke out in Warsaw on October 19, Moscow has been frantically offering concessions. But these are concessions of dismay, and the roll-back continues.

This, then, is a time of reap-

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praisal for everyone. Moscow has now found that its "tough" policy has backfired in Hungary, and its "soft" policy has failed dismally in Poland. Its most urgent task, therefore, is to take a fresh look at the counter-revolution now sweeping much of Eastern Europe, try to foretell its course, and decide how the Soviet Union can live side by side with it. As I write these lines, Moscow has offered all its satellites, past and present, to withdraw its troops, revise the harshly one-sided economic agreements and, in general, correct the "downright errors" of the past. But the Soviet leaders are still not of one mind on the scope of the concessions needed; there are indications, for instance, that the Russians are reinforcing rather than withdrawing their troops from Hungary.

Perhaps the only consolation Moscow can have at the moment is that the government in Warsaw remains Communist, and (at the time of this writing) the Communists still retain a voice in Budapest. But Gomulka is rebellious, and Nagy is all but hostile, and Moscow cannot watch with equanimity the tremendous impact their activities must have on the other East European states, notably Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

But if this is a time of reappraisal for Moscow, it is also so for the West. It is now abundantly clear that the West in general, and Washington especially, never had a genuine policy towards Eastern Europe. What it did have in the guise of a policy was such slogans as "Liberation" and anti-Communist propaganda, often of a dubious quality. Now that the counter-revolution has begun, the West can no longer afford to coast along without a policy. Will it be far-sighted enough to extend generous help, with no strings attached, to the former satellites now headed by what one might call "marginal Communists"? Will it use its influence to install in power the emigres who for the past seven or eight years have been "gentlemen-farmers" near Washington, and who are despised in their native lands? Will it be able to recognize the emergence of a powerful and growing bloc of non-Soviet nations, which will be politically independent, bound to Moscow only by tenuous ties, and staunchly anti-capitalist?

This, finally, is a time of reappraisal for the Western liberal who, for his inability to build his own spiritual home, has sought it in what he thought was a Socialist paradise in the East. For a generation and more, he remained loyal not to what was true but to what he imagined to be true, and sought a refuge in rationalization each time history showed him that the home he had chosen was no place for a liberal. For if he truly searched his conscience he would have found that there was no justification for Janos Kadar's torn-out nails and the system of horror they represented. What will the liberal who hailed the original October Revolution say now of the men who revolted against that revolution? What will he do if a clerical-Fascist system arises in the ruins of Stalinism? And would he now be able to build a refuge of his own, on his own ideological grounds?

ARABIA vs. ISRAEL

Background to War . . by WALDO FRANK

[*Waldo Frank, noted author, lecturer and critic — his* Birth of a World: Bolivar in Terms of His People *was an outstanding contribution to biography—recently returned from a visit to Israel. He is now writing* The Ladder and the Thigh: a non-Zionist Portrait of Israel, *scheduled for publication next year. The following article, extracted from a chapter of the book, provides the background necessary for an understanding of today's headlines.*

For topical comment on Middle East developments, see editorial on page 337.—ED.]

FOR THE problem of Israel, there is no panacea. This perhaps is the clear approach to it. The problem consists of complex, conflicting, *living* elements which only time and internal change can integrate into a living balance. These elements must be admitted, not obliterated, to become organic tensions.

What are some of these warring elements, which must be modulated, as nuclear energy may be, from destruction to construction?

1. The Western powers, principally Great Britain and France, sustained their Oriental empires through the access and the wealth of the Middle East; and this assumed the submission of the Middle East's inhabitants, the Arabs. Arabic oil, which turns most of the wheels of Europe, is merely a final, crucial form of the dependence of Europe, hinged, in its present set-up, upon the dependence of the Arabs. With the decline of the Western powers, their own position has given power to the Arabs. They are being aroused in nationalist and pan-Islamic movements.

2. Their legitimate thirst for freedom, since they have no democratic traditions, is largely exploited by old-fashioned *sheikhs* or by demagogues who use the power of their countries' wealth and the fanaticism of their people to blackmail the Western powers. The essence of the Middle East's wealth, in a world still desperately clinging to nineteenth-century political-economic forms, is not oil, but geographical position.

3. The expanding pressures of Communist Russia, heir of its Czarist past, seek a place in this power

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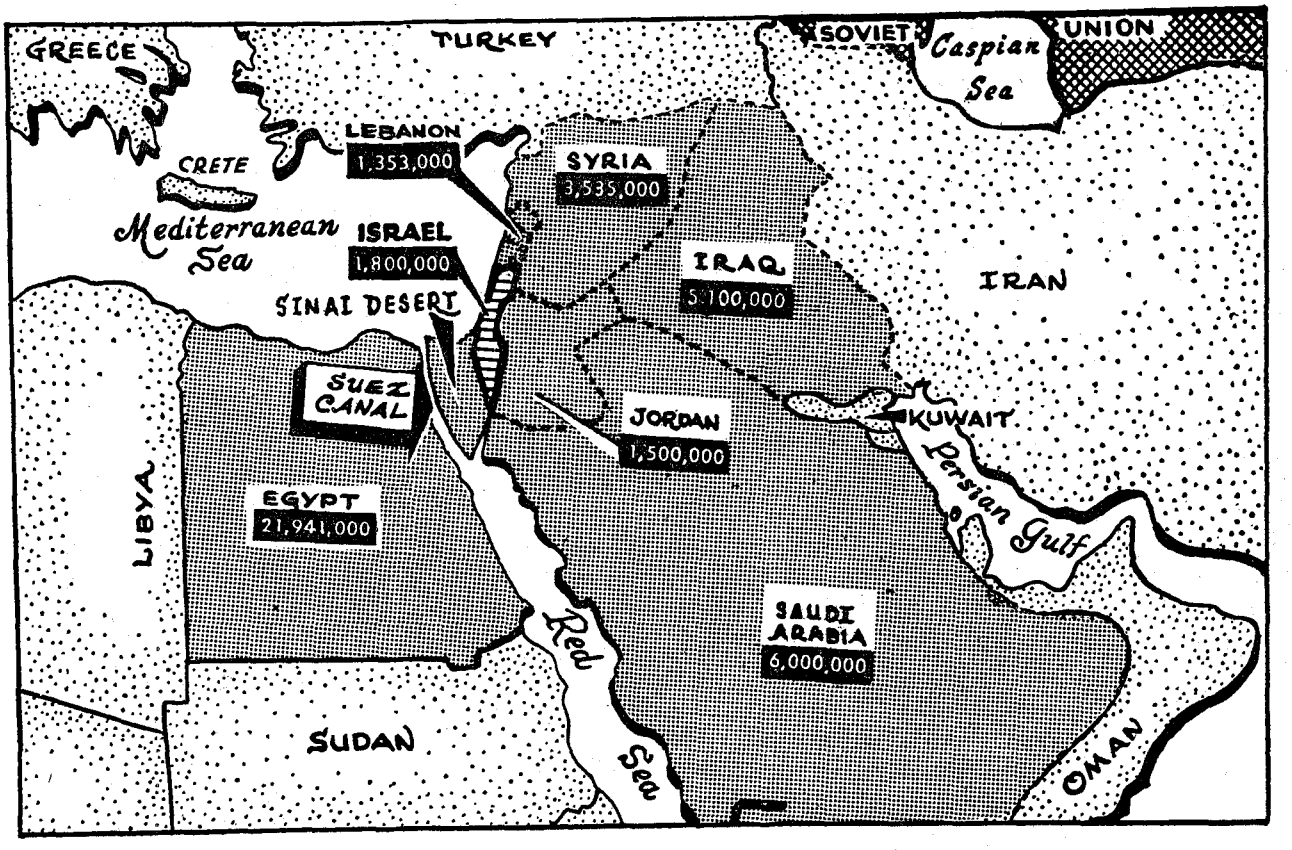
Populations: Israel and Its Arab Neighbors



chaos. Communism is strengthened by an expansive ideology and by its *de facto* status of enemy to Western "imperialism." The Arabs too have the fanatical ideology of their religion to energize their rise against the West and against alien ideologies. They are also extremely poor (Egypt is the world's most miserable and crowded population); and their discontent is deflected by skillful demagogues for their own ends.

4. Into this cauldron of cross-purposes, the Jews have bodily thrust themselves. Their "Zion," where they were to find the peace which surpasses understanding and mystically to expand it unto all the peoples of the world, has been the cockpit of battle since the Assyrians, the Medes, the Greeks and the Romans.

5. The Jews of Palestine represent no single, simple impulse, but on the contrary a complex of drives as mixed as the forces arrayed against them. They have a religion whose premise of a Messianic return to Palestine frontally clashes with the religion of Mohammed. Most of them do not practise the forms of this religion; but its energy moves them toward a secular messianism which the Mussulman rejects both because of its mystical roots and because in its secular flower it relates the Jew in Palestine to the imperial Western powers. Moreover, in the modernity of their politics and science, the Israelis *are* the West and suspect even when "bearing gifts." Reason reveals to the Arabs the benefits of science; racial egoism prompts them to fear its invasiveness and to accept it only on their own nationalist terms.

6. The emotional and spiritual background of the Zionist movement, which with miraculous success, in a few decades, has made of Palestine a modern Western nation, is unknown to the Arabs or is disregarded. When, as with the Arab intellectuals, it is known, the Zionist solution for Jewry's ages of persecution—the ghetto centuries, the Russian pogroms, the final horror of Hitler—is passionately rejected. Anti-Semitism, they would say with much truth, is a Christian European problem.

7. The Jews, settled in Palestine, have spontaneously allied themselves with the West. (Today, with the new influx of Oriental Jews who have lived in Islam for a thousand years, this fact is stressed by the state's open assumption that the Oriental Jews can be assimilated into Israel only by being "Westernized.") Against Arab hostility, they turn to the West. Against Communist expansion, they turn to the West. More than any other ancient culture, they created the West. Western money has financed their building a Western nation; and their state is Western. Wherefore, in Arab eyes, the Jews in their tiny land (festering in the Arab flesh like a splinter) *are* the West; share Arab hate of their Western allies; share the distrust of the Communists and pro-Communists among the Arabs. (And these are numerous.)

8. Such facts and motives, infinitely intermingled, grew more embroiled after the Second World War. Hundreds of thousands of dispossessed Jews, survivors of the wrath of Hitler, pleaded the right to settle in what the Balfour Declaration called their legitimate homeland. Britain feared the displeasure of the

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Arab *sheikhs*, loss of the Arab oil, and refused to let more homeless Jews pour in. The resentment of the Palestinian Jews rose to fury. It is not to be doubted that if the British after the war had opened the gates, the Jews in Palestine would have welcomed the security and peace of Dominion status. The Arabs would at that time have been powerless to oppose it. The Jews, fighting with the British, had helped them to win Palestine. Trained in British armies, they now waged a smouldering, desperate war against their teachers. The *Haganah* observed moderation. Small groups, such as the *Irgun* and the Sternist terrorists, expressing the Jews' response to Hitler, turned like cornered beasts against the British. Sullenly, England withdrew from what had become an impossible situation. They were confident they would be called back, when the Arabs, as they foresaw, poured into the vacuum left by their departure. Instead, the Jews proclaimed a state. They had been ready to become a Dominion, or part of one. Now, as the Arabs invaded, they had been ready to accept the United Nations plan of Partition, which gave Israel 54 per cent of Palestine, west of the Jordan. But the war, as they saw it, erased Partition. "Give us back our young men killed by the Arab invasions," they said, "and we will go back to Partition." The Armistice, signed in 1949 in Rhodes, found the battle-line crazily twisting through Jerusalem's streets, through a no-man's-land at the road to Tel Aviv, almost reaching the Mediterranean west of Samaria, with a ten-meter strip of the east shore of Lake Tiberias. They had defended 75 per cent of Palestine and were resolved to keep it. The Armistice terms guaranteed Israel free commerce on its coast and access to both Suez and the Red Sea. These terms were ignored, since no navy was there to enforce them.

9. A half-million Arabs had fled from Israel during the war, for a number of reasons never mentioned by the Arab orators in the United Nations. They had fled because the Arab leaders urged them over the radio to get out of the way of the invading armies. They had fled, after the first Israeli victories, because they feared for their lives. (Had not the Arabs promised extermination to the Jews?) They had fled, in some cases, because aroused Israelis were violent against them. Now the Jewish immigrants poured in; the Arab farms were filled. The war was not over; it was stratified in the psychology of the humiliated Arabs. They refused to discuss the fate of the refugees, who increase and multiply (approaching a million) in the camps of Gaza and Jordan.

10. The Arabs and their partisans insist that the Palestinian Arabs were *driven* from their homes. This justifies what they know to be the impossible demand that all of them return (about 80,000 did return, and at one time Israel agreed to repatriate another 100,000). How do we know, in this clash of statements, where the truth lies? We have the evidence of the recorded radio instructions by Arab army leaders. Far more reliable, we have the common-sense logic of the situation. When the Arab armies came in, grossly outnumbering the Jews — came in from the North, the Northeast, the East, the Southeast and the South, what reasonably would have been the response of the Israelis? To meet the invader on every front, in very settlement, and to repulse him. The Palestinian Arabs were everywhere behind the lines: in villages, in cities, in farms. Could the Israelis have spent their precious rare manpower rounding them up, driving them out, fighting them to expel them? Would they not rather have prayed that the Palestinian Arabs would remain where they were, causing no trouble? Surely, they urged them, as they insist they urged them, to stay in their homes and be quiet. They reassured them they would not be molested. When the Arabs went, they were not stopped — obviously. No less obviously, the improvised Israeli armies were too busy to start a war against them.

THIS, I believe, is a just schema of the present situation. What can we make of it? On the level of individual attitudes and facts, nothing. Each detail, each argument, has its antithesis. The Jews claim Palestine as their ancestral home, and their one home (behold what became of them in Germany, where they had dwelt since the age of Julius Caesar!). The Arabs claim that they have lived there for the past twelve centuries. The Jews quote the Balfour Declaration; the Arabs reject Britain's right to have made it. The Jews place on the record the bill-of-sale for every Palestinian acre they acquired until the Arabs made war or left the land to the victors; the Arabs reply that American dollars also are a form of invasion. Jewish orthodoxy and nationalism collide with Arab orthodoxy and nationalism. The Jews remind the world that they were homeless and landless because of persecution, whereas the refugee Arabs have a million square miles in which to settle. The Arabs counter that they are not responsible for the world's treatment of the Jews and that a man's being homeless does not justify his invading the house of another, no matter how spacious with how many empty rooms. The West clamors its need of maintaining the Middle East as an open highway for its commerce, a life-line for its oil; Russia puts forth analogous claims; the Arabs insist that the rights of their nations take precedent over the privilege of obsolescent empires.

ON THIS level of claim and counterclaim, of "right" and "wrong," we are lost in a labyrinth. The one way out is to dig *below* the specific issues or to rise *above* the maze. The quarrels of the Middle East have blinded participants and spectators to the basic fact that these lands are inhabited by human beings: by men and women and children! If the world can grow aware of this, it will become aware of the rights of these men and women to live; it will be able to impose this awareness upon all the actors of the conflict; and a start will begin out of the marish and night-marish maze.

No one questions the Arabs' right to live, and to live in the lands

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which have become consubstantial with their living. No one must question the Israelis' right to live; and the fact of many decades fulfilling the will of long ages has made their right to live in Palestine consubstantial with *their* right to live. The Arabs might blast the Israelis out of their narrow land; this indeed is what their chieftains threaten. Then the Israeli would die. Grant his right to live, and his right to live where he is goes with it.

The right to live transcends ethical judgment; it hinges on the mystery that *one is living*. This indeed is the official stand of the United Nations, which, however, has so often wavered in implementing its stand that it may be said to have betrayed it. When the United Nations fails to insist that the Arab state discuss peace with the Arab states; when it permits them to blockade Israel's coast and to deny Israel access to the Suez Canal, etc., it is betraying its recognition of Israel's right to live.

Israel has become, for better or worse, the *form* of the life of two million Jewish men and women. To concede, as most of us do, its right to live and to deny the embodiment of its life is absurd.

If this elementary proposition about Israel is granted and *proclaimed* by the nations of the world, the Arab chieftains will hear and will hearken. The specious antagonism between Israeli and Arab will diminish. The vast majority of Arabs have no contact with Israelis (therefore they can be made to believe malevolent fairy-tales about them). Those that do have contact soon discover its potential benefits. The Middle East's complex problems cannot be swiftly solved. But this existential base for their *confrontation* will at least have been created. A clear note of Israel's *right to be*, sounded in unison by the nations of the world, would bring a change of attitude with the effect of magic.

I do not ignore the impediments to the inauguration of this "magic": the Arab's political immaturity and indifference to democratic measures, his low standard of living compared to the Western Israeli; his corrupt leaders' investment in his ignorance; the clashes and hurt pride of nationalist egoisms; the head-on collisions of the two orthodoxies; communism's false simplifications and incentives. No panacea can "cure" them overnight. But the voice of a firm world judgment will be heard, and will create even in Cairo an atmosphere in which full-scale war would be unable to break out. Supporting the present flimsy armistice of arms there would be a psychological truce in which—the longer it lasts —Arab and Israeli will begin again to regard each other as humans, as neighbors, as potential partners in such urgent affairs as irrigation and the exchange of goods and of ideas.

How these collaborations might begin, how proceed, no one perhaps can say. They may be at first quite informal. They may spread beyond the carapace of the official hostility which of course will last long; and subtly, gradually corrode it, before officialdom grows conscious of a change. The creative acts of man are always initially obscure, because we insist on looking for them in the one form they never take: the form of the creative acts of yesterday. This applies to art, to religion, to economics — and to politics.

The "incompatibility" of Arab and Jew has been induced by the confusions we have noted and by the charges of will within them. It is substantially nonsense, — but nonsense can commit murder. The Arab, intelligent, flexible, swift, leaped from the desert that absorbed him into stagnation — and is on the move again. How he moves in the next decade depends on the pressures of the world. He *could* move into communism. As I had occasion to point out long ago*, there are deep analogies between early Islam and Russian communism. If the conditions that favored communism in Russia and China remain, the Arab response to them might take an analogous form (though not identical). Islam communism would be tempered and transformed, as it indubitably will be in Russia by the deep orthodox Christian tradition; in China by the momentum of two millenia of Confucius. Arab communism would have a Bedouin ferocity.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Unholy Land

THE ISRAELIS' clear advantage in the present struggle is that they do not desire, nor does their program incur, the death of the Arabs. Their presence in Palestine calls for many adjustments (the plight of the Arab refugees is the extreme instance); but it need not hinder the health and happiness of a single Arab. On the contrary, their skills, industrial, political, scientific, can be of great value to their neighbors.

To this end, which would be an organic beginning, both the Israelis and the West must shift their positions. The West must prove that its democracy, and its championing democracy abroad, are real. Israel must prove that it is not a satellite of any colonizing or exploiting power. It must establish and prove its independence also of world Jewry, which is dependent on these powers. It must argue for its existence on less legalistic terms than the dubious Balfour Declaration. Although ready to defend itself at any hour with arms, it must lean less on its victory of 1948 for the establishment of its frontiers. Justice, not the 1948 Armistice, should mark Israel's boundaries. Israel should have the lands of Palestine because it needs them, and vast Araby does not.

But Israel should be ready to make concessions. It has already offered Haifa as a free port for the use of Syria and Jordan. It would probably agree to ensure Egypt some

*Dawn in Russia (Scribners, 1932).

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form of passage to the Arab hinterland through the Negev. I think it could most profitably allow the internationalization of Nazareth (which is predominantly Arab) and Jerusalem. This might injure the Israelis in their nationalist pride. But it would incarnate the concept of Israel as a people dedicated to the service of the whole brotherhood of man. It would make of these two cities, sacred to half the world, an active symbol of the vision of the Prophets. They would become, in themselves, a prophecy and a promise.

But all this — so urgent and so possible! — cannot begin to be, until Israel's *right to be* is effectively acknowledged. Does the world owe less to Israel or to itself?

THE GREAT EXPERIMENTER

Essence of Brecht's Genius . . by LION FEUCHTWANGER

Translated by Therese Pol

BERTOLT BRECHT lived to be acknowledged beyond Germany's borders as the outstanding dramatist of our time, and this international critical acclaim came to him in spite of the difficulties a foreign readership necessarily experiences in appreciating the significance of his work. For a true understanding of his art can hardly be gained from the printed text of his plays. Brecht strove for an all-encompassing work of art; the essence of his plays is revealed only in their presentation, in *his* presentation, which breaks with all forms of the theatre as we have known it.

Like Shakespeare and Molière, Brecht was a born theatre man, for whom all aspects of his craft were vibrantly alive. He used to tell his stage designer exactly what sets he wanted, and Caspar Neher, Germany's most talented man in this field, owes the best of his art to him. When he worked with composers, Brecht would whistle the tunes for his songs, or sing them in his rather shrill voice. I still remember the day he sang for Kurt Weill certain melodies he remembered from street singers in his native Augsburg, and which were then resurrected in *The Threepenny Opera.* The poet in him was always complementing the stage director, and the director was complementing the poet.

Brecht believed in collective effort, and felt that "one ought to push ahead on a wide front." Wherever he happened to be, he was surrounded by a group of followers who believed in him unquestioningly. Together with his wife and companion, the actress Helene Weigel, he created a theatrical ensemble—a collective group—which enabled him to plan, organize and experiment as he pleased. He conducted this group as he would an orchestra.

Drawing by Berger

Bertolt Brecht

During rehearsals Brecht was quarrelsome, domineering and irritable. He would not rest until his actors had given everything they had. He drove them to frustration and exhaustion. He fed on the vitality of others, but he himself gave without stint or envy. He had the capacity to bring out hidden talents in his players, he tapped qualities of which they themselves were ignorant. Many actors, especially those worthy of the name, have acknowledged that they owe the essence of their art to Brecht.

He firmly believed in the dialectic approach to art. One of his principles was: let's look at the matter from the opposite angle. Just as Goethe insisted on a fat Hamlet, precisely because this kind of Hamlet violated all tradition, Brecht liked to select for his characters those actors whose art and temperament seemed diametrically opposed to their roles. It sometimes happened, also, that after weeks of rehearsal, dissatisfied with the results, he would go back and start the whole production over from scratch. Brecht demanded patience from his collaborators, but he gave more than he asked for.

BRECHT regarded everything he had done as provisional, as something still in the process of creation. To him, books he had long since published, plays he had long since staged, were by no means finished, and it was especially the works he loved best — *Saint Joan of the Slaughterhouses, The Good Woman of Setzuan, The Caucasian Circle of Chalk*—that he looked upon as fragments. With other Germans he shared the attitude that the completion of a work was less important than the labor put into it. He listened attentively to all suggestions and criticisms, he consulted the audience about their impressions, he turned his hearers into active collaborators. Whenever a com-

LION FEUCHTWANGER, noted German novelist now living in the United States, is the author of Power *and many other books.*

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ment made sense to him he revised what he had done, and, if necessary, he was perfectly willing to start from a new angle something he had already revised a thousand times.

It is the unbroken continuity of this creative process that makes his works so dynamic. They force the listener to develop for himself the themes outlined on the stage; they stimulate him into doubt, argument or agreement with Brecht. The playwright described his plays as "didactic." He wanted to provoke his audience, in particular to rouse their opposition; he wanted to argue with them, and help them—and himself—to sharpen their minds.

This Socratic quality pervades Brecht's entire work. It preoccupies the reader, it grasps his attention, it fascinates him time and again.

Brecht's brilliant gift for controversy was not confined to his plays. This ardent man was even more fiery in a debate. He had a bold new idea every minute. He liked to express himself in paradoxes, he defended his theories with a keen wit even when they were untenable; he would eventually become vehement and aggressive, only to drop the argument with a sly and good-natured laugh.

HE DID not believe in mood: he believed in the experiment. Experimenting was his passion.

When Brecht, at the age of twenty, came to see me, I was working on a "dramatic novel." The term "dramatic novel" gave Brecht food for thought. He declared that in fusing the dramatic with the epic element one should go much farther than I had; he never ceased trying to create the "epic drama."

It was not out of false modesty that he described his dramas as "experiments." These plays were indeed "experiments" in the sense that they presented his inner world to the audience in new and ever-changing forms. He thought that the poet ought to experiment, as Archimedes, Bacon or Galileo had done. To him, all dramas written before his time, including those of Aeschylus and Shakespeare, were "experimental." He praised Shakespeare for unscrupulously taking the plots, and sometimes even the forms, used by other dramatists to create something new. Brecht himself took all substances and forms that excited his imagination, worked them over, remodeled them, made them his own, and transformed them so thoroughly that they ultimately belonged to him altogether. The masks of the Chinese theatre, the flower path of the Indian drama, the chorus of ancient tragedy—all these served him to project his own vision of the world.

All experiments tempted him, even if they promised little or no success. Once I called his attention to the didactic poem by Lucretius, *De Natura Rerum*. The hexameters in which this Roman presented the doctrine of Epicurus inspired Brecht to cast the Communist Manifesto in the form of hexameters. I pointed out the difficulty if not the hopelessness of such an undertaking. But he was obsessed by the idea and would not let it go, and so we tried it. We worked for six weeks before he gave it up.

It was extremely fortunate that during the decisive years of his artistic development the various theatres throughout Germany did everything to further Brecht's experiments. No matter how shortsighted the policies of the Weimar Republic, its attitude toward literature and the arts was generous. Many influential politicians were seriously interested in art and literature, and in the twenties the theatres were officially subsidized. Brecht's most productive period as a dramatist coincided with the heyday of the German theatre. Intelligent and art-minded producers placed their theatres at Brecht's disposal for his experiments.

Leopold Jessner, director of the Berliner Staatstheater — himself a man who loved bold experiments— was deeply interested in Brecht. On his well-financed and excellently organized stage Brecht was able to experiment to his heart's content. He had unlimited time for rehearsals; he would cast and recast as much as he liked (all German actors of note were at his beck and call), and if he eventually dropped scenes or even whole acts on which an enormous amount of time and money had been expended, people understood and did not hold it against him. What helped him greatly was the attitude of Berlin's reviewers, who waged passionate battles over his plays. If Alfred Kerr, the city's most renowned critic, occasionally derided him with his biting and brilliant wit, Herbert Ihering, who was scarcely less famous, fought for Brecht's new art with ardent enthusiasm and a profound understanding of the playwright's aims. Throughout the German Reich people took part in this artistic struggle, which sometimes expressed itself in spectacular honors and then again in violent scandals. Either way, Brecht merely chortled and went on with his work.

This most happy time in Brecht's life abruptly ended when the National Socialists came to power. Brecht, whom the Nazis had always attacked with unrestrained venom, had to leave Germany and its theatres. During his years of exile he wrote poems of great power and beauty. Now and then he found dévotées who helped him put on his plays even if they promised no commercial success. As an example, Charles Laughton, highly susceptible to the subtleties of the spoken or written word in any language, worked with Brecht on the English version of the latter's *Galileo*; the result was an excellent performance. But this was an exception. The commercial theatre that Brecht found outside Germany's borders repelled him. During his fifteen years of exile—a very long time in so short a life—this creative theatre man was for practical purposes without a theatre in which he might have tried out his plays.

AS AN adolescent, Brecht had taken part in the abortive German revolution of 1918-1919 with a good deal of noisy enthusiasm. To this son of a small middle-class manufacturer, all bourgeois conventionalities were anathema. It was relatively late in his life when Karl Korsch and Fritz Sternberg introduced him to the theories of Marxism. Brecht was aware of the danger that his poetic gifts might be squan-

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dered by moving in too many directions, and in the Marxist doctrine he found a welcome focal point for his work.

Of all the classic Marxists, he was most strongly attracted by Friedrich Hegel. He was fond of quoting from Hegel's *Geschichtsphilosophie,* in which the philosopher analyzes the reasons why the Roman Republic inevitably had to end in a dictatorship of a Caesar. It is no accident that Brecht's last wish was to be buried in the Dorotheen-Friedhof in Berlin, near Hegel.

He frequently pondered about history's "great men." This extraordinary playwright used to indulge in juicy jokes about these "big brains." One of his plays, *Mann ist Mann,* is a graphic expression of this attitude. He also meditated constantly on the concept of timeliness. In discussions, or in his works, he liked to expound the theory that what appears today to be senseless and corrupt at one time might have been sensible, meritorious and progressive. Brecht and I once revised an earlier play of mine called *Warren Hastings.* We both agreed—and this is also the conclusion reached in the play—that this governor-general of India, brutal, unscrupulous and politically corrupt as he was, viewed in proper historical perspective was beneficent and progressive—a great man.

Brecht spent his last years in East Berlin, and the East German government, like the Weimar Republic, placed a theatre at his disposal. This prompted certain West German circles to make smear attacks against Brecht.

It so happened that Brecht, being a true poet, was interested in the history of his time, but not in daily politics. Some of his works have had political repercussions, but their content and influence transcend day-by-day politics. If isolated reviewers regard Brecht's plays as purely political, one is reminded of those Danish sailors in Hamburg who broke up a performance of *Hamlet* because they considered the drama as propaganda hostile to the Danish government.

Brecht seldom voiced his opinion on contemporary events. Whenever he did, it was in sweeping sentences that strove to emulate the style of Tacitus. The last of his pronouncements was an Open Letter to the Bundestag, West Germany's parliament. He implored the members of this body to veto universal military service and pleaded for a plebiscite to be held in both parts of Germany. The bold, grandiose language of this Open Letter will survive our time.

THE English and French translations of Brecht's works are good, some of them excellent. But the full power of Brecht's language cannot be captured in a translation. Brecht's language was of the people, but never vulgar or hackneyed; it was fresh, but never arty or synthetic—an organic mixture of the mandarin and the vernacular.

Martin Luther, the greatest language creator the Germans produced, was able to "look into the people's mouths" and use most of their speech. The German vernacular that Brecht found at the end of the first World War offered little to the man who wanted to write a poem, even less to the writer of lyrical prose and nothing at all to the dramatist. Furthermore, poetry and prose as they were practiced by the writers of his day were alien to Brecht.

He was indignant over the stubborn material he had to work with. Occasionally he would lament: "When Horace expresses the most commonplace thought and the most trivial feeling, they sound magnificent. That's because he worked with marble. Nowadays, we work with dirt." Brecht used a much coarser term.

He labored hard to find the right nuance to express his nature, thought and feeling. He would quarrel bitterly with his co-workers about a single turn of phrase. He was totally unconcerned with any rules or examples. When someone pointed out that one or another expression was too great a violation of grammar, he liked to paraphrase a famous saying: "*Ego, poeta Germanus, supra grammaticos sto*" ("I, a German poet, am above the rules of grammar").

Brecht's creative inspiration derived mainly from gestures. He first visualized the gestures of his characters in their various situations and then searched for the corresponding word. This word had to be to the point, it had to be light and "elegant," and its sound had to evoke the characters and their situation. Brecht spared no effort to find the right word, *his* word. While we were working on the *Life of Edward II* and all day long had looked for the right word, he came running to my house in the middle of the night, whistled under my window and shouted triumphantly: "I found it!"

Germany has had many great language masters. As for language creators in this twentieth century, it produced only one: Brecht. It is thanks to Brecht that the German language of today can express feelings and thoughts which it could not put into words when Brecht began to write.

In one of the works of Lavater, in which Goethe collaborated, the former defined the essence of genius as follows: "Genius is the unlearned, the unborrowed, the unlearnable, the unborrowable, the intimately individual, the inimitable. As such it is known among all nations, and as such it will be known so long as men think, feel and speak." The unlearned, the unlearnable, the inimitable—Brecht had all of these.

Brecht needed a vast theatre organization to render his visions visible. The glaring newness and inexorable truthfulness of his art challenged the opposition of those forever wedded to the past. It was hard to help him gain the place he deserved. With Swift he shared the genius and the *saeva indignatio,* the outraged temperament, and with Swift he shared this experience: "When a man of genius appears in the world, it is immediately recognized by the fact that all the blockheads join forces against him."

The impatient poet Brecht wrote the first poems and the first plays of the third millennium. It is gratifying that time gradually caught up with him and that he was permitted to see it. But if today's generation can sense the scope of his significance, the full magnitude of his work will be appreciated only by those who come after us.

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FALL BOOK SECTION

Youth Will Serve Itself

By Lawrence Lipton

YOUTH will be served. We hear the old adage repeated more than ever today, when everybody is trying to keep looking young in order to avoid being tossed out on the industrial scrap heap. But the adage—it was never even half true—brings a wry smile to most of our youth. They know that in the past it has meant that youth will be served—with a draft summons. And those who were not careful to keep their mouths shut might be served once more—with subpoenas and contempt citations. Five years ago somebody coined the phrase, The Silent Generation, and on many the label seemed to fit. Today there are indications that, in some quarters at least, youth is beginning to realize that if it is to be served anything it really needs or really wants it will have to serve itself.

When *Time* surveyed The Younger Generation (Nov. 5, 1951) it reported that the youth from eighteen to twenty-eight was grave and fatalistic, conventional and gregarious. Intellectually, *Time* reported, the young seemed "a bit stodgy." Their mental adventures were apt to be "mild and safe," and their literature ran to "querulous and self-protective introspection." There were "precocious technicians" like Truman Capote, William Styron and Frederick Buechner, but their books had "the air of suspecting that life is long on treachery, short on rewards," that disappointment is life's only certainty, and their work was "a by-product of their neuroses." Either through "fear of being tagged 'subversive'," (*Time* was still putting it in quotation marks in 1951) through "passivity or conviction," youth was "ready to conform." Marxism seemed "dead" among them, democracy "strong but inarticulate" and "the movement" was "what Poet-Professor Peter Viereck calls the revolt against revolt." It was significant that "increasing numbers" of the youth were "seeking their faith not in secular panaceas but in God." In short it was The Silent Generation.

That was the picture *Time* painted in 1951. Thereafter its news columns reported the more spectacular tidbits from the juvenile crime file, and an occasional story on drug addiction, draft evasion, army desertions, conscientious objectors, and now and then a running gag like young Davis, self-styled Citizen of the World. But it did not then, and does not now, consider "Timeworthy" such items as the appearance of a new little magazine (unless it has rich and/or eccentric sponsors), or a new literary trend or change of reading tastes among the youth, or the emergence of a new type of student publication. Otherwise it might have found, even in 1951, more in the literature of the young than bogus youths who are merely failures to mature or college boys flirting with gilded bohemias. Today youth is beginning to serve itself, in ways that are, I think, newsworthy if not Timeworthy, on campus as well as off campus.

THUMBING their noses at the *Time* and *Life* literary directives and without waiting for permission from the faculty, some Harvard undergraduates have brought out during the last two years six issues of *i.e. The Cambridge Review*. A few quotes will suffice to give the reader some idea of its direction and tone: "The great lament now is student apathy. This is the most inarticulate form of opposition, and it has come to exist because there is very little place for articulate response"—a place that the *Review* was designed to provide. "At the time of their greatest independence the universities . . . were guilds of masters and students. . . . A power [against official meddling] that arose, oddly enough, from their very poverty. Unhampered . . . by physical apparatus, great libraries, worldly goods, and substantial college foundations, they could and on occasion did migrate, taking with them their large numbers of students and profitable trade." So Black Mountain College was founded by a migration in the early 1930's, a footnote adds. "Few things are more beautiful to see than good teaching . . . even so, the scene of the same aging grown-ups hanging around while generations of youth pass by, has something in it that stinks in the nostrils. As for colleagues, the company of the like-minded is both stimulating and comforting, but to be immured with the like-minded is like—living at Princeton."

> The struggle of this magazine has been the struggle to assume the critical position which dissatisfaction with the University necessitated. There is, it has been our conviction, much that is drastically wrong with Harvard's system. *i.e.* itself was started partly to give some of the content which we felt was lacking in University courses, and partly because the only other possible outlet, *The Harvard Advocate,* was a hotel for intellectual stuffed shirts.

LAWRENCE LIPTON is the author of the novels, Brother, the Laugh Is Bitter *and* In Secret Battle. *His recent collection of poems is* Rainbow at Midnight.

A Study of History

Warm sun, cold river, mist—
Do these make morning fresh?
To the anthropologist
Knifing under the flesh
Our Culture broods in fog
Heavy with time gone by,
Stinking rank of the bog
And a future blind to the eye;
Yet over the still of morning
Sun cries six o'clock,
Flood-tide slack at turning
Speaks of eddy and rock,
The osprey's hover, the quiver
Of current where herring run,
Cold life in the river
And flesh warm in sun.

LOUIS O. COXE

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Paul Goodman is prominent in its pages. One finds translations from Simone Weil; "Eros and Culture" by Herbert Marcuse is a notable contribution, and jazz plays in *i.e.* something like the role it plays in the lives of the young today. No. 3 leads off with a poem, "Requiem for 'Bird' Parker," by Gregory Corso, and No. 5 contains a piece on Gerry Mulligan by Glenn Coulter. In June the *Review* published a hundred page issue, "Harvard 1956," subjecting the whole Harvard educational system to examination and criticism. "We care as much as we dare," say the four editors who wrote the whole issue themselves. "We want fights because only then can there be a type of peace—what seems like peace now is only fitful boredom."

This, I submit, is something new and far from apathetic in campus publications.

Or take the case of the *Chicago Review,* published at the University of Chicago. Here, too, editorial policy has during the last two or three years taken on the tone of iconoclastic inquiry. The Young Idea is infectiously potent even in the language of such a caption as "Jazz and the Intellectuals: Somebody Goofed," by Nat Hentoff. And the content is constantly provocative. "America's native musical voice (jazz) is an alien tongue to most of the country's intellectuals. . . . During the past half-century (while jazz has evolved from New Orleans brass bands to Brubeck polytonality), the American intellectual-artist has continued to search restlessly and often profoundly for the roots of his culture. . . ." But he has overlooked jazz, "both as a musical language and as a way of life."

The Spring 1953 issue attempts to evaluate and assimilate the influence of Robert M. Hutchins. A young writer takes a look at the Hemingway of *The Old Man and the Sea* and turns away. What is needed is a new White Hope of American fiction, he says, "someone like Ernest Hemingway, 1926 version . . . dissolute perhaps, perhaps drunk, . . . (but) roaring mad with the excitement of truth." The off-beat note is everywhere in these pages. Walt Kelly, the creator of Pogo, turns up in the Fall 1955 issue with a parable that packs some effective but gentle irony: "We have faults which we have hardly used yet. But we are getting around to them." Student articles, stories and poems, both here and in *The Cambridge Review,* hold up well alongside such professionals as Selden Rodman, Bernard Berenson, E. E. Cummings, Mark Van Doren and Henry Miller. There is room for Russell Kirk's New Conservatism and also for my own "disaffiliation" and dedicated poverty. The *Chicago Review* augments its university subsidy with public poetry readings. Its articles of opinion are widely commented on by magazines of larger circulation and often reprinted.

This is a far cry from the cute capers of student mags which made news only on the intellectual level of goldfish swallowing and panty raids. Perhaps the schooling provisions of the G.I. bill had something to do with it. The new campus magazines are drawing much of their editorial talent, material and readership from "vets" in their late twenties. Lachlan MacDonald of the *Chicago Review* is a good example of the type. "Form? Yes. Technique? Of course. But the first thing I look for is content," I heard him tell a group of young writers recently. And Angus Stewart Fletcher of *i.e. The Cambridge Review* wrote to me, "We have been thinking of devoting a whole issue of *i.e.* to the undermining effects of American business upon American thought and art."

OFF CAMPUS the same ferment is brewing. Unsubsidized, never more than a jump ahead of the printer, financed for the most part out of the editor's weekly paycheck (and often also his wife's), the little Davids do battle with the Goliaths of middle class complacency and the "engineers of public acceptance." From the monthly newsprint *Intro Bulletin* in New York to the quarterly *Coastlines* in Los Angeles the accent is on youth, but a youth that demands answers, and none of the old, easy answers, whether they come from the Right or from the Left. Everything is "at the crossroads." Whether it is an article on modern dance by Leighton Kerner, on jazz by George H. Moorse; or Storm De Hirsch, F. N. Karmatz or Lawrence Ferlinghetti reporting on public poetry readings in New York, Chicago and San Francisco (in *Intro Bulletin),* Mel Weisburd on science-fiction in *Coastlines,* or Jay Pell or Leslie Woolf Hedley taking the New Criticism apart in *Whetstone,* the question is always "What went wrong, what do you know that's new, and where do we go from here?"

In magazines like the new *Liberation* it takes social and political form. The first (March 1956) issue started right off with a "Tract for the Times," searching for "roots" in four "root traditions from which we derive our values and standards": the Judea-Christian prophetic tradition; the American tradition as exemplified in Jefferson, Paine, Emerson, Debs, the Utopian community experiments, the Abolition movement, the Underground Railway (to name a few); the libertarian democratic, anti-war, socialist, anarchist and labor movements in Europe and the United States, and the tradition of pacifism or non-violence as exemplified for instance in Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave. A heritage, a guide, but not an answer. The answers are still to be explored, by discussion, but also and more importantly by experience, by action. Past and forthcoming contributors include veterans —Waldo Frank, A. J. Muste, Lewis Mumford, Dorothy Day, Pitrim Sorokin, Kenneth Rexroth and Kenneth Patchen—but the editors are nearly all young men and some of the most thoughtful and penetrating material in the magazine is coming from their hands.

Michael Harrington who is one of its younger contributors, takes the editors to task for downgrading Karl Marx's analysis of Capitalism as a guide to present-day world trends: "Some of its [Marx's analysis] specific predictions were wrong; some were amazingly exact; but as a living instrument of knowledge it is still the finest tool the radical has. This is especially true with regard to themes that *Liberation* clearly intends to make its own: of the alienation of man in modern society, of his de-spiritualization." It is strikingly characteristic

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of the younger generation today that Harrington, a politically active writer, should also be the author of "Art: Philosophy or the God-Like Image?" in the *Chicago Review.*

The same versatility of interests—and abilities—is discovered even in more popular, satirical media like *Mad* magazine, which are edited and read by young people for the most part. In *Mad,* everything in American life comes in for critical comment, in text, cartoons and captions: politics, radio-tv, Hollywood, newspapers, advertising, sports, comics, manners and mores. And it is good, solid, cogent comment, not despite but because of its burlesque tone, which it describes as "humor in a jugular vein." Newsstands cannot keep up with the demand as huge stacks of *Mad* are snatched up by young people eager to read things like—

TENSE TYCOONS
AND LUCKY BUCKS

Mad's own Business Novel 'Crash McCool' Reaffirms Spiritual Values of Cool Cash

The shrewd parody of *Cash McCall* that follows is as good literary criticism in its way as any review of the book in the radical or liberal magazines.

What is most significant about this new trend in the literature of the younger generation is the unanimity of its attitudes on so many things. Simultaneously you will find a cartoon strip in *Mad,* an editorial in *Liberation,* an article in the *Chicago Review,* a short story in *Coastlines,* a poem in *Whetstone,* an essay in *The Cambridge Review,* and an interview in *Intro Bulletin,* all focussed on the same subject or the same book or the same recent event, and all from pretty much the same point of view. Clearly something is "in the air."

Noisiest of all, paradoxically, are the privately—well, all but privately—published, and the as yet unpublished. The sound they are putting down, to fall in with their own lingo, is deafening, but it is audible only to those who know what doors to open. They might be called the underground of contemporary American literature. Here jazz is very near-

Cape Dread

For those who come after, that is how we named it;
You may find that some other suits it better. Only
We pray you, for no saint christen it. The toll of us
That it took, we do not yet know the unhallowed
End of it, any more than we can assess
Our own ends beforehand. All summer
We had coursed a strange ocean, the winds driving
From quarters that seemed unnatural, and the set
Of the currents sorted not with our learning.
But in autumn sometimes all waters seem familiar,
With leaves, quite far out, littering the ground swell
On smooth days when the wind is light. And in
The haze then you can believe you are anywhere:
Standing off a home shore, and can even smell
The sweet dankness of smoke from known hearths. So we
Bore on, feeling courage more fresh in us
Than on the day of our sailing, musing
How far we might fetch before winter. Then
Through the mist we raised it, the abrupt cape
Looming dark and too near to leeward;
And recognized, like a home-thought too, in that landfall
The other side of autumn: that the year
Would bear us no further, that we would not
Get beyond this. Perhaps it was named
At that moment in our minds, when we sighted
The shape of what we knew we would not pass.
You cannot mistake it: the dun headland
Like a dreaming Dutchman, dough-faced, staring
Seaward to the side we did not penetrate.
You almost think he will turn as you
Grope your way in with the lead-line. Hope suddenly
Was as far behind us as home, and maybe
That made us clumsy, dull of heart going in.
But the waters are treacherous off that point,
With a fierce knot of currents twisting, even
At slack-tide, snatching you from your seaway,
Sucking over a jagged shelving, and there is
Rough shoal beyond that. Three ships we lost
And many of their men there, and only we
Because we were driven far to port, almost
To the drag at the cliff's foot, and made in
Through the very spray, found the channel. There is
Nine fathoms all the way in there, to the broad pool
Of quiet water behind the tide-race;
You can anchor in five fathoms at
The lowest tide, with good holding, and sheltered.
You will use the harbor; in other years you will
Set out from there, in the spring, and think
Of that headland as home, calling it Cape
Delight, or Dutchman's Point. But what we found
You will find for yourselves, somewhere, for
Yourselves. We have not gone there again,
Nor ventured ever so far again. In
The south corner of the cove there is
An inlet flowing with sweet water,
And there are fruits in abundance, small
But delectable, at least at that season.

W. S. MERWIN

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ly the language and the way of life that Hentoff says it should be. Their literary models appear to be Walt Whitman, Ezra Pound (the *early* Pound, and the Pound of the Letters), Henry Miller, William Carlos Williams, Robinson Jeffers, and, here again, the two Kenneths, Patchen and Rexroth. Richard Eberhart described their West Coast scene—he thinks it is unique, but I doubt it—in the Sept. 2, *N. Y. Times Book Review*. If you are living in the San Francisco area, he says, you might receive a card:

CELEBRATED GOOD TIME POETRY NIGHT

Either you go home bugged or completely enlightened. Allen Ginsberg blowing hot; Gary Snyder blowing cool; Philip Whalen puffing the laconic tuba; Mike McClure his hip high notes; Rexroth on the big bass drum. Small collection for wine and postcards . . . abandon, noise, strange pictures on walls, oriental music, lurid poetry. Extremely serious. Town Hall theatre. One and only final appearance of this apocalypse. Admission free.

Eberhart reported a recent visit: "Hundreds from about sixteen to thirty may show up and engage in an enthusiastic, free-wheeling celebration of poetry, an analogue of which was jazz thirty years ago . . . shouting, stamping, interrupting, applauding. Poetry here has become a tangible social force . . . through spoken, even shouted verse. . . ."

In the Seattle area it is more of a beer joint affair, centering on the off-campus curriculum sparked by Theodore Roethke and Stanley Kunitz at the University of Washington. In the Los Angeles area it is, like the city itself, less centralized and more varied in literary influences and group behavior. There is the group that gathers at the *Coastlines* fund-raising parties. Thomas McGrath is perhaps the best known example of the type. A poetry workshop meets in the home of poet-fictionist Curtis Zahn in Malibu for beef stew and explication. There are the student groups around U.C. and U.C.L.A. There is the *California Quarterly* group. Gil Orlovitz is convivial and vocal enough to be a movement all by himself. James Boyer May's house is on the visiting list of almost everyone in the little magazine world; his "circle," although it is chiefly a mail correspondence circle, is world-wide. The ocean front group, finally, centers on Stuart Z. Perkoff whose book of poems, *The Suicide Room,* is scheduled for early publication by Jonathan Williams. (The Williams list includes Patchen, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson and his own poetry with prefaces by Louis Zukofsky and Robert Duncan.)

The counterparts of most of these will doubtless be found in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, New Orleans and other cities, grouped around small presses, little magazines and influential literary personalities. They are closed circles, but highly vocal within their own groups. Their members work, preferably, at jobs like nightwatchman or shipping clerk—six months punching a time-clock and six months with the Muse—on Unemployment Insurance. They are not joiners, either socially or politically. They regard trade unions as labor agencies whose pie-card bosses "sell labor" at the bargaining table. They are not Orwells or Isherwoods "discovering" poverty and being shocked by it. They accept it. All they ask of the state is to deliver water at the tap, pick up garbage, keep their Unemployment Insurance files straight, and leave them alone. "Our prime value," one of them told me, "is 'making it', by which we mean taking your reality and not being destroyed by it." To "make it" is to make a living on the minimum subsistence level and still do your writing. They live from day to day. "We try not to think about the future. There isn't any future. You have to live as if there isn't any future." Not a few of them are marijuana users. "It heightens the sense of the immediate present," one of them explained to me. "Pot enables me to live in the immediate present, and take it." The motto of the apoliticals among them is "Keep cool (in the jazz sense), get what you can, keep out of trouble. Mistrust everything." What you will hear from them most frequently is "Why don't they leave us alone?" "They" are the "squares," the respectables who sooner or later turn out to be the cop, "the man with the gun on his hip." Or the man who hands you a rifle and orders you to kill.

The Silent Generation? Yes, and No, depending on where you look and whom you listen to. If you have ears to hear, even the silence has an ominous sound.

The Misuses of History

AN HISTORIAN'S APPROACH TO RELIGION. By Arnold Toynbee. Oxford University Press. $5.

THE PROFESSOR AND THE FOSSIL. By Maurice Samuel. Alfred A. Knopf. $4.

By Geoffrey Barraclough

FOR MOST of us, remembering Bishop Colenso and certain controversies of the nineteenth century, history and religion do not normally run in harness. There are historians (so called) who regard it as their special job to extol their tribe and (if need be) their tribal deities; there are others who have convinced themselves that history is the progressive revelation of God's will, as expounded by one or other of His prophets. But most historians, through their perverse habit of ranging over the centuries, have become blasé, if not downright cynical. For them nothing is quite white and nothing is quite black. They know that the ancient Greeks, while building the Parthenon, cast out unwanted babies, particularly females, and neither the Greeks nor the Parthenon seem worse for that. They know of civilized societies in which no one minded if you were homosexual, or denounced you as un-American. This sort of knowledge is apt to blur their moral judgments; they become relativists and social liabilities and have their passports

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taken away. And, last but not least, they find it terribly difficult to believe that any religon has a monopoly of truth, absolute and eternal. It is all urbane, and perhaps beneficent; but it leaves the great mysteries untouched, and casts no light on man's innate religious impulses. And this is as it should be, because our religious impulses are (as the portentous would say) "parahistorical," or (as you or I would say) they fall outside the historian's terms of reference.

FOR THESE reasons most people would regard the historian as peculiarly disqualified to pontificate about religion. Not so Professor Toynbee. For him, what to most people seem disqualifications are definite recommendations. In his eyes the parahistorical beliefs which have sustained religions are evidence of "inordinate, criminal, suicidal pride." The belief of the Christian in the central significance of the Crucifixion, the Judaic belief that God picked out the Jews as His "Chosen People," the Islamic belief in Mahomet's unique quality as the last of the prophets—these central tenets, without which it is impossible to conceive how these three religions could exist at all, are (he says) "a deliberate reversion to the self-centredness that is the hall-mark of 'Original Sin'." But the historian, viewing the whole range of human endeavor from a loftier altitude, has no such illusions; and that is why, in Professor Toynbee's eyes, "the historian's point of view" is so important. History shows that the days of the historic religions are numbered. The "annihilation of distance" and the unification of the world through "Western Technology" have rendered them obsolete, because each and all they are only "local heritages," none of which is of universal appeal. Now that the whole world is one we need a world religion, and the historian, because he is not inhibited by childish belief in "a unique and final revelation," is the chap to tell us what it should be. To prove his point, Professor Toynbee does tell us. Analyzing the existing "higher religions" and disengaging "the essence from the non-essentials," he extracts for us a lofty synthesis, in which their "essential truths and essential counsels" are "coalesced into a common heritage."

Is it necessary to argue how specious this story is? In spite of western technology the world is not one, and does not look like being one. And where is the evidence that the "annihilation of distance" is bringing about such "intimate relations" that "the spirit of the Indian religions" is entering "Muslim, Christian and Jewish hearts?" That is not the obvious deduction from current trends in Asia or in Africa. Nor is it self-evident, save perhaps to the converted, that we in the West are suffering from "disillusionment" with our scientific "idols," and ripe for a return to religion. On the contrary, for most people materialism works admirably, and the silences in which the still, small voice makes itself heard, are smothered by the blare of loudspeakers. Equally unconvincing, on the other hand, is the story of a "spiritual crisis," with which Professor Toynbee is obsessed. There is as much genuine religion about today as ever there was, even if it is not expressed in churchgoing; and Professor Toynbee's nostalgic side-glances at the Middle Ages are moonshine. In short, the whole historical substructure he has built is shaky and will not carry the construction he has put on it.

But the theory that history is working towards a religious synthesis is no more plausible in terms of religion than it is in terms of history. Of all possible outcomes "syncretism" (to give it its technical name) is the most unlikely. It has never worked, as Constantine the Great discovered to his cost. And the reason why it has never worked is so fundamental that we are justified in saying that it cannot work. It cannot work because it conflicts with man's fundamental religious impulse which leads him to worship the unique and the individual, not the common denominators Professor Toynbee so carefully disentangles for our edification. One has only to read Professor Toynbee's elaboration of the "essential truths and essential counsels" of the seven "higher" religions to see what is miss-

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RUSSIA WITHOUT STALIN

THE EMERGING PATTERN

by Edward Crankshaw

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ing. They leave us stone-cold. Unlike the essential tenets of Christianity or Judaism or Islam, focussed on one decisive moment, his synthesis neither strikes the imagination nor warms the heart. Indeed, we may hesitate to call it religion at all. The reason men profess Christianity is not (as Professor Toynbee seems to think) because it gives them a "deeper insight into the mystery of the universe" or "holds up a higher ideal" than other religions; it is because they accept and wish to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Between this and syncretism in any form an unbridgeable gulf is fixed.

The same applies, in their own contexts, to the other religions of the world: to Buddhism, to Mohammedanism, to Judaism, and the rest. It is what Maurice Samuel means when, criticizing Professor Toynbee in *The Professor and the Fossil,* he says that Judaism is "not only an ethos" but also "an outlook on life." The implication is that the meaning of Judaism cannot be grasped by a cool intellectual appraisal of its theoretical content, but only by seeing what the Jews did with their religion and what their religion did with them. What a theme for a historian! And how characteristic that Professor Toynbee passes it by! If ever there was a people for whom the religious experience is the central experience of their history, it is the Jews. How, save through the strength and integrity of Judaism, is their miraculous survival to be explained? As Mr. Samuel says, "there is hardly a century in which the outside observer would give Judaism a dog's chance"; but the Jews, against all probability, refused to die. And the ultimate reason why they refused to die was, and is, "the certainty of being wanted by God, even in rejection"—in other words, their overriding belief in the historic covenant made by God with Absalom. It does not matter two pins, I think, whether from the historian's point of view this belief is "true" or not. It is a parahistorical fact which he simply has to accept. Abstract this living faith, and Jewish history becomes unintelligible. Yet abstract it is precisely what Professor Toynbee does. In *A Study of History* he dismissed Judaism as a mere "fossil," and thereby roused Mr. Samuel's wrath. Now he has abandoned (without specifically withdrawing) the charge; but Judaism still remains "a bad religion," which is "spiritually sterilizing," and it was apparently not by clinging to their faith but by "diverting" it from "its true mission" that the Jews succeeded in "keeping in existence." Could anything be more perverse?

THERE is no need to repeat the cogent arguments with which Mr. Samuel blows this preposterous misinterpretation sky high. His book should be read from cover to cover, and if I have left it to the end, it is not because it is of minor importance but because it clinches the argument. What is more pertinent is to ask how Professor Toynbee, who is certainly not ignorant of the points Mr. Samuel and I have made, has got himself into a position which, to the outside observer, looks singularly like standing on his head. And the answer seems to be his refusal to accept the ineluctable limitations of historical study. One is the impossibility of explaining everything in terms of ascertainable causes, of cause and effect, of "social milieu," or even of Professor Toynbee's two current gambits: sociology and psychology. Even a total disbeliever, like the present writer, will concede that the survival of Judaism can intelligently be treated only as providential, in the sense that it cannot be accounted for on any calculation of historical probability; and if another historian wished to describe it as a manifestation of God's will, I should not quarrel over terms. But Professor Toynbee—who, far from being a disbeliever, professes to regard all history as "a vision of God revealing Himself in action"—is quite impervious to this evidence of revelation, and explains away the survival of Judaism by a shallow mechanistic argument which is as passé as it is unplausible. It is very disconcerting.

It is even more disconcerting to find that, for Professor Toynbee, history is a sort of "open sesame," offering a "glimpse" at least of the eternal verities. In reality, as we all know, the historian operates, exactly like the chemist or the physicist, with a limited range of data, and with this limited data he can obtain only limited results. Particularly in regard to religion the fundamental issues lie outside his range. That, indeed, is why the historian is quite right, as historian, to suspend belief in the validity, absolute and eternal, of any religion. It does not imply that he can prove, as Professor Toynbee apparently thinks history can prove, that no religion is "unique and final"; it simply means that it is a question that history cannot answer, either positively or negatively. On the other hand, the historian is perfectly well able to demonstrate that Professor Toynbee's statement that Judaism is "spiritually sterilizing" is nonsense; for this is a question of the historical consequences of religious belief, which falls within his field of enquiry, and one needs only to turn to Mr. Samuel's book to see how overwhelming the evidence against sterility is. Thus, from whichever side we approach the question, we find Professor Toynbee and the historian in conflict, and it becomes clear that his approach to religion, whatever else it may be, is not the historian's approach.

Song for a Departure

Could you indeed come lightly
Leaving no mark at all
Even of footsteps, briefly
Visit not change the air
Of this or the other room,
Have quick words with us yet be
Calm and unhurried here?

So that we should not need —
When you departed lightly
Even as swift as coming
Letting no shadow fall —
Changes, surrenders, fear,
Speeches grave to the last,
But feel no loss at all?

Lightest things in the mind
Go deep at last and can never
Be planned or weighed or lightly
Considered or set apart.
Then come like a great procession
Touch hours with drums and flutes:
Fill all the rooms of our houses
And haunt them when you depart.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

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Prospectus for an Anthology

By Frank O'Connor

EVERY race seems to have its particular virtues as it has its particular weaknesses. It may be good at music and philosophy like the Germans, or good at painting and sculpture like the French. Even within the framework of one particular art, it may excel in one form while remaining blind to the virtues of another, like the English, whose novels are admirable but who do not seem to know what a short story is.

Storytelling has always seemed to me a peculiarly American art form; it may even be *the* American art form. Teaching the subject in American colleges has only convinced me that I was right. Publishers continue to assure the young writer that short stories do not sell; magazine editors never cease trying to persuade their readers that what they really love is a nice juicy, factual article on "My Psychoanalysis" or "How I Kept My Hair"; but short stories continue to be written and discussed with the passion reserved for painting in Paris. One magazine alone rejects thirteen thousand stories submitted by young writers each year.

But it isn't only American; for some reason it is also Irish and Russian—Russian, at least of Czarist days—and I cannot help wondering what three such different races have in common which gives them the gift for one particular artistic form. The form is so little understood by the Germans that their name for it—if I am to go by the title of an excellent short story magazine published in Germany—is not *Erzaehlung* but *Story*. A few weeks ago a French poet explained to me: "The short story is a specialized art form for which French writers have never felt the need." And he knew his Maupassant.

I have sometimes argued that what the three races have in common is a keen sense of human loneliness. The most typical book of American stories is, I suppose, Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* which must be one of the loneliest books in the world—so lonely, indeed, that I have sometimes wondered if stories so painful could be works of art at all. Joyce's *Dubliners* might stand as an Irish counterpart, while almost any book of Chekhov's would complete the illustration. There is, for instance, the Chekhov story of the cab driver who, grieving for his son's death, tries to speak of it to his indifferent passengers, and who finally goes to the stable at night to unburden himself to his old horse.

Some day, when I edit my anthology of American stories, my first choice will be Anderson's "Untold Lie," the story of two men, one on the point of being forced into a marriage he does not want, the other already trapped. The second man wants to cry out to his friend to save himself, to fly to the ends of the earth if necessary, but the story ends with a surrender to circumstance. Hemingway's "The Three Day Blow" is another aspect of the same situation. Two boys make themselves drunk while they discuss the same sort of decision with a different outcome. But Nick Adams is lonely too, this time because he has *not* married the girl.

Willa Cather's loneliness is of similar quality though of different kind. Hers is the loneliness of the sensitive, artistic soul in a society which does not recognize the arts. In the stories in *Youth and the Bright Medusa* there is a horror of the artist's loneliness, which, even more than with Anderson, has caused me to ask myself if such unrelieved suffering could be art at all. Perhaps it isn't, but as with the difference between Joyce's *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the Artist* I find my-

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FRANK O'CONNOR is one of the great Irish storytellers; he is also a teacher, critic and dramatist. His most recent book, Mirror in the Roadway, *is discussed by Maxwell Geismar elsewhere in this issue.*

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self preferring its naked intensity to the artifice of the finished work.

America even more than England is subject to those hysterical fits of literary fashion that relegate a great writer to the doghouse overnight, and I have no doubt some readers of my ideal anthology will ask: "Why Dreiser?" Well, of course, among great writers, Dreiser is perhaps the least literate. As a storyteller he has all the worst faults of the novelist, which for me are embodied in the stories of Henry James. The novelist works at the greatest possible distance from the object; the storyteller works so close to it that he ends up cross-eyed. The novelist's stories are full of justifications. How did his narrator come to meet a particular character? "It was on a morning in early spring in the year 19—, while travelling on the 8:45 train from New York to the little town of N—, that I first became aware of McGinty." Has McGinty gone to Paris and changed his women? Then, back from Paris must come the well-known connoisseur, Weinberg, who happened to meet McGinty at an art show in the company of a strange woman, later to be identified as Yvonne. Blimey! The novelist never seems to ask himself how a particular incident is likely to affect his reader, but only how he is to persuade his reader that the incident really came to his knowledge.

But Dreiser had a sense of interior perspective rare even among the greatest novelists; an understanding of the contradictions that compose what we know as character. One, at least, of the stories from his *Gallery of Women* I must include.

DREISER and Hemingway are a wonderful pair to study side by side for Dreiser is all depth and little surface, Hemingway, all surface and little depth. Which does not mean that I underestimate the importance of surface. Surface in a short story is impact. Dreiser's impact is always diffused and vague, and it is only when I have put down the book that the story begins to take shape in my mind. Hemingway's impact is immediate and complete; perhaps that is why the impression fades so rapidly.

Like most writers of my generation, I was deeply influenced by Hemingway. To me, he will always be Uncle Ernie, the softest heart and the stiffest upper lip in the family, though now I know that I shall never be able to decide which came first, the sensitiveness or the upper lip, because Uncle Ernie's weakness was that he was so sensitive that he had to find ever newer and greater ordeals to submit himself to in order to exercise the lip. I have never been able to forgive all those lions and bulls the pain they must have caused him, and if I still prefer the Wisconsin stories like "The Three Day Blow" it is because the ordeals to which he there submits himself are those that most of us have had to endure.

I do not like the Hemingway of "The Killers" or the Faulkner of "That Evening Sun." Their theme is that of *The Emperor Jones* and *The Informer* and it seems to me a theme that asks nothing of the writer. The Faulkner I admire is the greatest American humorist after Twain. The two best American novels are *Huckleberry Finn* and *As I Lay Dying* and if I don't print one of Faulkner's great comic stories like "Shingles for the Lord" it will only be because I want to rescue from *Sanctuary* the chapters that describe the Snopes boys in the brothel, a great comic creation linked to a book with which it has nothing in particular to do.

Of Katherine Anne Porter I do not know which to prefer, the exquisite little stories about her grandmother and the old Negro nurse or that magnificent long story, "The Cracked Looking Glass," in which the tragedy of a woman's loneliness is resolved in tenderness and laughter. William Saroyan, like Dreiser, is now undergoing the "O Breathe Not His Name" treatment, but as a mere foreigner I shall probably get away with that unforgettable story, "The Third Day After Christmas" in which a little boy, abandoned outside a saloon by his father, is brought home by the barman.

Unfortunately, a working writer rarely knows the work of his contemporaries, or knows it only by accident. It was by accident that I read the stories of Wallace Stegner and J. F. Powers, and I read John McNulty only because he had written about Tim Costello's saloon on Third Avenue. I might so easily have missed the enchanting story of the taxi driver who passes on his love problems to his passenger, a perfect and joyous companion piece to Chekhov's tragic story of the cab driver. But though McNulty's taxi driver may be lonely, and Powers' young priest in "The Presence of Grace" is lonely, neither is as lonely as any character of Salinger. As Willa Cather develops the fundamental human loneliness of Anderson into the specialized loneliness of the artist in a provincial society, Salinger takes the process a stage further when he describes the unique loneliness of the neurotic, of the man or woman too good for the world, who if he or she does communicate with anyone, does so only for a few moments with a pert little English girl as in "For Esme With Love and Squalor" or fails disastrously to communicate at all as in "Franny." That, too, is a very American thing which the European finds it difficult to understand.

SOMETIMES I question myself and wonder whether I am attracted by certain great stories because they express an underlying mood of my own, or whether I am attracted to them because they are written close to the source of storytelling itself. That problem came up again with the latest story added to my ideal anthology, one called "The Drawback" by a young writer, R. T. Gill. It is only a few weeks since it appeared in *The New Yorker*. A little boy has died; the women of his family lament him in reciting his praises and remembering his sweetness: only the boy's father, stubborn in his sense of loss, refuses to join in the praise and angrily repeats that the boy was naughty and insubordinate. And once more I do not know whether I admire the story because it is one I would have wished to write, or, in the same way in which I admire a sonnet by Ronsard, because it says perfectly the sort of thing for which the art it represents was created to say.

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Beckett: Style and Desire

By Herbert Gold

WAITING FOR GODOT awakened passions seldom used by the contemporary theatre. Customarily a play flops or captures the women's club bookings or wins the Pulitzer prize and is then swiftly forgotten. This wild one has everyone still wildly explaining. It is said to be a play about the hopeless quest for God, Sex, Truth, Friendship; it is a Chaplinesque moral comedy about anarchic individuality; it is a religious morality play; it is burlesque and satire and a pathetic melodrama. In Miami they walked out; in New York the run was extended. Tennessee Williams and Kenneth Rexroth said it was the greatest, the very end; Norman Mailer was so stimulated that he wrote a series of columns in *The Village Voice* explaining that it was all about impotence, and when the publishers of the newspaper fired him for his pains, he paid for a full-page advertisement to have one last despairing say on the subject.

The ambiguous excitement of *Waiting for Godot* is also stimulated by the novels.* An ad hominum expression of the theme of estrangement suggests itself in Beckett's literary development: An Irishman, he not only expatriated himself, as many Irish writers have done, and in France, as his older friend Joyce did; but also he gave up English to write these books in French—and then translated them back into English himself. As if he is totally abstracted from his native land, from his past, from the language of his childhood, he lives in a private universe where the history of life is merely the history of death, where society has become a deserted beach on which the hero scavenges for stones to suck, where language changes to a troubled monologue unbroken by other speakers. No matter, he writes with a corrosive poetic flair. He seems to be beyond nationality; yet these strange novels have something of the tone of folk tales about some folk not yet existing. Launched from Paris, they are parable balloons which fly very high and warningly.

Participation in Beckett's world is dangerous and destructive, as is participation in the world of the great artist or the madman. We should not look the other way when the possibility of Beckett's madness presents itself. Beckett is odd, but there is too much control of the fantasy to put him down as merely odd, merely one of the wildest practitioners of what Robert Fitch has called the "mystique de la merde." He tempts and invites us, he compels us to share his experience, he

**Waiting for Godot, Mulloy* and *Malone Dies* by Samuel Beckett are published by The Grove Press in both paper covers and cloth bindings.

Cuban Woman Confronts the Sea

Across from the *Calle Primera,* where we live facing the loud mouthed sea,
The *ruido* sea, the noisy, busy, heedless, egoistic sea,
The boat ridden, fish tossed, underworld sea,
Lives the turbulent, willful woman
Cared for by a limpid fifteen year old Negress.

Time, tossed free by high wind and huge fortune
Sends her each day by two grandsons a score of hours for harangue:
A qui! here, boys, quick, play here, here! there the world's too big,
The dangers too great, the *wahwah* will kill you, the fire will burn,
the sea drown.

So does she, reckless with her endless exhortations,
Ruido, storm and rock the peaceful air
And urge back in sheer amazement the incoming tide.

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obliges us to join him. "Nothing human is foreign to me,"—he lives up to this joyously pessimistic saying. He writes with some of Joyce's wit and Kafka's myth-making obsession and Dostoevski's pious despair. The stylish sources need not dismay us: We must all come from some place. He is uniquely Beckett-like despite his derivations.

"YOU must choose between the things not worth mentioning and those even less so. For if you set out to mention everything, you would never be done, and that's what counts, to be done, to have done." Mulloy is dying. He is on his way, furious, empty, senile. His harried monologue serves futility and despair. He remembers his long life with a curious indifference, and yet with a nagging passion for making the connections between the accidents of his existence and the mind which makes him an individual. His awareness—diminishing, fading and frustrated—is his only tool.

Concerned only with himself, he can give a due measure of attention to such a basic process as flatulence:

> One day I counted them. Three hundred and fifteen farts in nineteen hours, or an average of over sixteen farts an hour. After all, it's not excessive. Four farts every fifteen minutes. It's nothing. Not even one fart every four minutes. It's unbelievable. Damn it, I hardly fart at all, I should never have mentioned it. Extraordinary how mathematics help you to know yourself.

Mulloy is a perverse Descartes, proclaiming: I stink, therefore I am.

From this he proceeds quite naturally to some observations about love. He wonders if he has really known love. Yes, there was a woman, but was it really a woman? It could easily have been a man disguising himself. Did he really consummate the act? Well, he doesn't remember for sure what he did. If he has these questions, can it really have been true love? Perhaps not. The doubt is comic, of course, but points in its way to a common suspicion. Who were we really and what were we doing when we felt so beautifully ourselves? What happened to us afterwards? What happened to that significant Other with whom we believed ourselves to be in communication?

Both *Mulloy* and *Malone Dies* employ the narrative manner of Lucky's monologue in *Waiting for Godot*. In the play, Pozzo says, "Think!" just as earlier he had said, "Move! Go back!" Lucky used to obey wordlessly. Now he starts Thinking, and cannot be stopped. We open the novels and we cannot stop him. "They had shaved me, they had shorn me. . . ." And on and on from stercoraceous humor to scatological psychiatry to a vagrant bit of Irish poesy about the moon. "And the next pain in the balls was anthropology and the other disciplines, such as psychiatry, that are connected with it, disconnected, then connected again, according to the latest discoveries."

The final words of *Mulloy* are a great demonstration of Beckett's effort to find the truth. He exemplifies the problem of the moral writer and his hope of telling what he knows through the lie of fiction. "I went into the house and wrote, It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows. It was not midnight. It was not raining."

THE dying writer, Malone, promises: "I shall pay less heed to myself, I shall be neither hot nor cold any more, I shall be tepid, I shall die tepid, without enthusiasm. I shall not watch myself die." But he does. It is practically all he does. "That would spoil the story." But it does not. It *is* the story; it is our own story, too, the great song of mortality—regret, regret, regret. "All my senses are trained full on me, me." We hear the baby's yelp, *me! me!* The repeated *me* cries out the perfect, devout, generalized concentration by the infant on its own life. The rest of the world is a mere extension of its body; Mother is an appendage, like an arm; Father is an organ. Satisfactions are self-generated. Don't we retain some nostalgia for this primary nutty age? Beckett faces it both desperately and with gusto through the mask of senility. He is an irrational reasoner. He writes under a total complaint which only his wit makes bearable.

The hero of *Malone Dies* continues this theme of hopelessness mitigated by irony and eloquence. Beckett raises by his practice a crucial issue of literature. The popular critics, particularly the anonymous guardians of culture at Time-Life-Fortune, ransack contemporary novels for moral truths which they can snip out and pass on as recipes for their bigger, better, safer America. When they find the proper exhortations in Herman Wouk or Sloan Wilson, they rest content, breathing easy, secure from the risks of imagination. But when they read the work of such as Beckett, they fall into a deep cosmological exasperation. The novel is dead, they cry out; novelists are

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spoiled children, isolates, deviates, in fact bohemians.

A writer like Beckett can appear to give them their case. He really does seem to be more than usually odd and his pessimism fanatically absolute. However, intelligence and personality make a crucial difference. What he explicitly states, the actions with which he deals, do not tell the whole story. The philosophy is an almost pure nihilism, but the author's joy in coming to adequate expression of his feelings is communicated to us as pleasure in creativity, in life. Here is the great meaning of style. A reader has the problem of assimilating a manner, an angle of vision—which represents a man's emotional resources—to his subject—which represents his observation of life. The challenge of synthesis is part of the creative process involved in reading. These two aspects of a single work, style and subject, cannot be separated; both decadent writing and decadent reading consist in the attempt to separate them.

Samuel Beckett presents the issue dramatically. He gropes for fictional adequacy in dramatizing scenes which are scatological, morbid, perverse, pathological—and yet the wit and the powerful will to communicate change the tone for anyone attuned to the play of a lively imagination. His ultimate "meaning" is a problem for us, but not one which can be settled by labeling him as a dung-heap mystic. This ambiguity of the writer's relation to his material has been insufficiently examined by the professional critics. Beckett challenges us because he presents an extreme example of stylistic difficulties and a hopeless, troubled and troubling philosophizing. "No, I want nothing," he writes.

But yes, Beckett still wants everything, no matter what he makes Malone say. We understand that the remark is a clearsighted prevision of what Malone will get, but we realize also that he lies about his desire. The lie leads us to our own hopes. In its dramatic context it has some of the power of the tragic truth-telling of great fiction. Beckett sees, through men subsiding toward death, what Aristotle called "the moving image of desire." Despite everything, he accepts the main challenge.

The Birth of Venus

Risen in a
welter of waters.
Not as Sandro saw her
standing upon a frayed and lovely surf
clean-riding the graceful leafy breezes
clean-poised and easy. Not yet.

But born in a
tidal wave of the father's overthrow,
the old rule killed and its mutilated sex.

The testicles of the father-god, father of fathers,
sickled off by his son, the next god Time.
Sickled off. Hurled into the ocean.
In all that blood and foam,
among raving and generation,
of semen and the sea born, the
great goddess rises.

However, possibly,
on the long worldward voyage flowing,
horror gone down in birth, the curse, being changed,
being used, is translated far at the margin into
our rose and saving image, curling toward a shore
early and April, with certainly shells, certainly blossoms.
And the girl, the wellborn goddess, human love—
young-known, new-knowing, mouth flickering, sure eyes—
rides shoreward, from death to us as we are this moment, on
the crisp delightful Botticellian wave.

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By Kenneth Rexroth

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Needham's is the sort of project which, nowadays, if it gets done at all, is done by committees of scholars drawn from all the universities of the world. Yet he moves with ease and confidence in regions where the most highly specialized committees would tread with temerity.

Great synthesizing works of scholarship have an aesthetic appeal, different from but often as great as great works of art. Perhaps because history is itself an art, one of the Muses, said the Greeks, few books are more moving than a vast philosophical history. This is true even when, as in Ignatius Donnelly, Spengler, or Arnold Toynbee, the guiding ideas, the philosophy, and even the facts, are mistaken, false or wrong-headed. Who is likely to forget those excited nights of adolescence spent with *The Golden Bough* or *The Decline of the West*, or, even in maturity, the impact of the first three volumes of Toynbee? Yet hobbyhorses and foolhardiness do not make for the most enduring qualities in the aesthetics of history. Gibbon's *Decline* is probably the greatest achievement of eighteenth century Europe, it is also one of the ten great prose works of all time, ranking just below Thucydides, *Genji* and *Don Quixote*. It is also singularly correct and exhaustive. Joseph Needham may not be Gibbon, but he is a very remarkable man, and he has written what is already, less than a third completed, a major monument of historical scholarship, worthy to rank with the science histories of Sarton and Thorndike and Sigerist. In some ways, notably in prose style and organizing ability, in sheer interest and lucidity, it is the superior of any history of science and related subjects since Heath's great work on Greek mathematics.

Science and Civilisation in China is not just an exciting book; its effect is stunning, and this not least because excitement is so unexpected in a field given over, alas, to the worst sort of finicking. For more than twenty years American sinology has been dominated by individuals and traditions from the old Czarist academy, where Far Eastern studies were essentially part of the curriculum of military policy, with the resultant narrowness, formularization and bigotry. Considerable work of breadth has been done in recent years, but without exception by scholars independent of the school dominant in the United States, often by persons the academicians consider amateurs and upstarts. This has not been true in Great Britain, but then, A. E. Waley, E. R. Hughes, even Needham himself are dilettantes in the eyes of our sinologists. I think it is important to explain this to the lay public because it has all sorts of practical consequences in this period when it is of life and death importance that we grow in understanding of the Far East.

It is hard to think of a better way to approach an alien culture than by a study of its science. Religious concepts, by slight tricks of mistranslation, can be perverted. Confucianism can be assimilated to the demented fascism of Ezra Pound, Taoism to Mary Baker Eddy, Buddhism to Theosophy; but the statement that the five elements are Fire, Water, Wood, Metal, Earth, has a salutary indigestibility about it. Our scientific provincialism is appalling. This is true not only of the layman whose notions of scientific infallibility come from advertising pictures of wise men in laboratory coats inspecting test tubes full of canned beans. It is found at the very top. The physicist Heisenberg, father of the dubious "principle of indeterminacy," says in a recent book that the difference between "our" scientific theories and Newton's or Kepler's is that ours are "correct." If true, it is frightening to look ahead to the onrushing centuries of ever-growing scientific unemployment. This is the worst sort of learned smugness, and nothing is better for it than a long quiet voyage amongst totally foreign scientific landscapes. Chinese science, both speculative and empiric, is radically, fundamentally different, and demands a willed, sympathetic reorientation of perspective on the nature of Nature.

TOO OFTEN works of scholarship in fields as remote as this are technically inaccessible to the common reader. Needham's book is not. Although the high scholarship, not just in sinology, but in dozens of related fields, is patent, it is never oppressive, and it explains itself as it goes along. Furthermore, Needham writes English prose, not the professional thieves' cant of the typical academic "paper."

The first volume is introductory. It has chapters on bibliography, special problems of the Chinese language, written and spoken, geography, geology, history and prehistory, the diffusion, migration and interaction of ideas and inventions between China and the West. Not one of these subjects but is full of booby traps for the rash. Volumes of nonsense have been written, especially by American poets, about the Chinese written character. Chinese culture has been derived from Egypt, the characters from cuneiform; the Mayan and Inca cultures have been derived from China, even the geography and geology of China have attracted those with more notions than sense. Needham avoids every pitfall. In almost every instance of dispute

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KENNETH REXROTH, author of many books of poetry, will bring out this year translations of Japanese, Chinese, Greek and French poems.

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he is about as near right, about as judicious a guide as the uninitiated could wish.

True, he seems to be a Marxist—or at least not unsympathetic. This leads him to give considerable space to the influence of waterworks, canals and dams for drainage and irrigation, and of the system of "ever normal granaries" on Chinese history and social structure. This is a popular interpretation in China just now and it is unquestionably fruitful. On the other hand the controversy over the nature of Chinese society—is it feudal or feudal-bureaucratic?—is due to the limited vocabulary of Engels, Morgan and Hegel.

It is simply not true that for four thousand years before Mao Tse Tung China was "feudal." This is like nothing so much as the old factional dispute amongst the Trotskyites over the nature of the Russian state. Needham settles for "feudal bureaucratic" and passes on to point out that really it is unique and specifically Chinese. Again, when Mao controlled only the Northwest it was the custom to lavish praise on the cultural contributions of the Northern Barbarian Dynasties and to attack the Confucian legitimism of, for instance, the Southern Sung. Now that the Communists control all of China, they have mellowed into a measure of Confucian patriotism. Actually the first position is more nearly correct. Needham wavers, but at this crux quotes Lattimore, written some years back. Similarly, there is little doubt that, Confucian theories to the contrary, China has been greatest when it was a federated empire with considerable autonomy of the parts. On this point contemporary theory is shifting and ambiguous. Needham avoids the issue, perhaps wisely. I am familiar with the wilder Marxist perversions of Chinese history and philosophy. I didn't notice them in Needham. In fact, I feel about his Marxism pretty much the way Lincoln felt about Grant's whiskey.

I am going to make a rash statement myself. I think the second volume is about the best guide to Chinese philosophy in English, or for that matter in any language, including the Chinese. Possibly this is because it fits my own predilections, but then, there is not much to compare. Wilhelm is elementary and sometimes wrong, Wieger is a Roman Catholic and often unsympathetic, Waley and Hughes deal only with the classical period, Fung Yu-Lan tends to see all Chinese philosophy as a preparation for his own—and so on. Needham approaches each thinker and school primarily, but not exclusively, in terms of reference to the growth of scientific thought—valid understanding of the world. There are chapters on each of the major schools, but he is most sympathetic to Taoism and Sung Neo-Confucianism. I should say that his interpretation of the latter is radical and stimulating, if not necessarily indisputable. There is a chapter on the basic ideas of Chinese science which completely supersedes Forke's famous *World Conception of the Chinese,* long the standard.

FINALLY there is a section on human law and natural law in China and the West which is a masterpiece. His point is that ideas of creation out of nothing, of a divine legislator, are unknown or repugnant to Chinese philosophy, as codified law is unknown to Chinese jurisprudence, and that therefore Chinese scientific thought has been far more organic than mechanical, permissive than authoritarian in its interpretation of Nature's ways. The dominant influence in this volume seems to be the organic philosophy of Whitehead, shorn of its Platonic excrescences. This has been an influence almost entirely for the good. It serves as an available bridge to the comprehension of a world in which Nature works by "doing nothing" instead of by passing laws, in which the universe moves as a great web of interrelatedness of which man and his imperatives are only part. That is basically a true picture of the Chinese universe. It is a universe full of strange and wonderful things. It is a universe Western man is going to have to understand if we are all going to survive happily together on a planet where, whether we like it or not, as Confucius said, "All men are brothers."

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The Poet and the Copywriter

By Howard Nemerov

Osric: a poet.
Oswald: an advertising-man.

Osric: My hair is falling out and no one reads my poems.
Oswald: My liver is bad, and everyone reads my ads.
Osric: Alas, I am marginal to the economy.
Oswald: Alas, I am central to the economy.
Osric: Of course, you had to sell your soul.
Oswald: And you were unable to sell yours; perhaps I could write you an ad? Soul, used but in fair condition, one owner, careful treatment, radio & heater. . . .
Osric: . . . spine damaged and binding slightly foxed. I know, I know,. Lost, one bard. Small reward. Sentimental value. Or else . . . .
Oswald: I can see you'd enjoy writing ads once you began. And I'd like to write poems, too, if only they had something definite to sell in them, instead of just truth and beauty, beauty and truth.
Osric: The idea that poems consist of beauty and truth is a common fallacy which Criticism has dispelled. You are still in the nineteenth century.
Oswald: You mean that your poems have neither beauty nor truth?
Osric: Oh, well, if you want to make it a personal matter . . . I suppose they do, somewhat.
Oswald: But you can't sell beauty and truth, either because they're free and everyone has all he needs of them, or because no one can afford them any more at all. With soap and gas and brassieres, you know where you are. It concentrates the language.
Osric: It does *not* concentrate the language. I think your ads are getting more obscure every day, and if it weren't for the manufacturer's name at the bottom I wouldn't know whether you were discussing soap flakes or democracy.
Oswald: Well, you know, we do like to put one in terms of the other.
Osric: In terms of, in terms of. If I hear that stupid phrase again I'll scream. Everyone uses it now. I heard a fashionable young woman say the other day, "I choose my lipstick in terms of my complexion."
Oswald: Well, you know, it sounds kind of scientific, and everyone likes that.
Osric: It sounds poetical — dirty rotten poetical.
Oswald: Why do you call yourself a poet if you hate whatever is poetical?
Osric: Because whatever is poetical, baby, belongs to you. If you keep telling women that without underarm perspiration they will immediately resemble Venus by Botticelli, then I must give up Venus by Botticelli.
Oswald: But in exchange you get underarm perspiration.
Osric: Yes . . . yes, there's a subject you haven't ruined: sweat, shame, secrecy, hypocrisy. . . .
Oswald: Go on, you might exude an ode.
Osric: Armpits! The smoky armpits of the world.
Oswald: Yes, I envy you your freedom to deal with the seamy side of life. But it makes you rather coarse in your rhetoric, where we should be delicate.
Osric: Yah, your delicacy. Sneaky minginess. But you have hit on a real point there: freedom. Poets may be poor, but they are free. A copywriter is nothing but a slave.
Oswald: Ah, yes, that precious freedom. Vergil's freedom to laud Augustus, Tennyson's freedom to admire railroads, Dryden's freedom to adore the smallpox sores on Lord Hastings' chin.
Osric: There may have been abuses.
Oswald: Then never mind the abuses. What about the Great Tradition itself? the centuries of edifying, instructing, bringing virtue out on top, purveying manners and morals to the

HOWARD NEMEROV, poet and novelist, is on the faculty of Bennington College. His novels are The Melodramatists, Federigo, or the Power of Love *and—to be published by Simon and Schuster in February* —The Homecoming Game. *His most recent volume of poetry is* The Salt Garden.

Time and Atlantis

Above the hanging gardens she looked down,
While the dark river flowed beneath the tower
There, there was calm, there, there was chastity
On the stone terrace blazed the fiery flower
Unknown, untamed the black Euphrates rolled
The centuries were drowned and hummed no more.

Over the balustrade the queen's hair flowed—
But golden summer in her southern lair
Walked like a lion among the yellow roses
Glittered like gold thread in the queen's gown
While from the hanging gardens she looked down.

On pinnacles, gardens, sculptured beasts, hot stone—
Between the hanging gardens and the heavens
Outside the desert stretched, the unshaded land
Burned in the long monotony of heat
While from the hanging gardens, she looked down

Languid and heavy for a summer's span
Between the rose-world and the barbarian
Whose desert shadow mocks the flowering world
Withers the garden, shakes the rose leaf down
Darkens the drooping eyelids of the queen
Only the desert shines—a painted scene.

But wait! This hour is light, the terrace shines
The melting sun beats on the orange tree
The sun-drenched palm, the scented, slipping vine,
Falls in an azure-veiled serenity
The crouching lions, through tropic sunshafts shown.

While from the hanging gardens she looked down.
The great queen's eyelids woo the ungentle skies
Remembers some cold fountain's limpid noise
Remembers lost Atlantis' brilliant isles
Drowned in the great floods of eternity
In a wild sweep through a great sea hurled
Between the nether, and the upper world.

MARYA ZATURENSKA

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great unwashed masses? What about "purifying the language of the tribe?" I may be a servile copywriter, but I think it more honorable to sell people soap than to sell them Cleanliness.

Osric: How could you sell them soap if we hadn't sold them cleanliness for all those centuries?

Oswald: So, you admit we're in the same business!

Osric: Nonsense. You deal in Things, material commodities, whereas I deal in spiritual values.

Oswald: Meaning that you insist on Cleanliness without providing soap?

Osric: Yes, dammit, I do. Spiritual cleanliness.

Oswald: With spiritual soap? Soft soap. As a matter of fact, though, it is the poets who are always talking about Things, and the advertisers who deal in spiritual values. "Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud." Look at all the *things* in one quite ordinary line of poetry. We advertisers, of course, would want to dress the whole proposition up a bit: "You wouldn't dream of having mud in your silver fountain—why have thorns on your roses?"

Osric: And there in your other hand would be a new, patent rose-depilatory.

Oswald: Quite likely. And what would be wrong with thornless roses?

Osric: Everything. The morality of the western world has depended for centuries on the fact that roses have thorns.

Oswald: And look at the shape the western world is in now. No, my friend, I tell you—in confidence—that you poets have had your chance and you're through. The future of poetry, I'm afraid, is with advertising.

Osric: That's perhaps the funniest thing I've ever heard said. If it weren't, I'd put my head in the oven.

Oswald: You'll want to try one of our new, fully automatic, self-regulating ovens.... Seriously, though, you're through. Poetry is done for and advertising is the only hope.

Osric: But quite apart from one million other possible objections, your advertisements are so terribly dull.

Oswald: I agree, I agree—though if it comes to that what about *The Fœry Queen?* But ever so many people seem to disagree. At least, they read advertisements every day and practically never read poetry. In almost any magazine you look at the advertisements take far more space than the stories, poems, articles, editorials—than all the stuff we may broadly call Poetry. Not only that, but the advertisements—dull as they are, and I agree they are dull—are frequently more interesting than the poetry.

Osric: I concede the point.

Oswald: Then if you'll be quiet for a minute or so, I'll try to explain the present position as we in advertising understand it.

Osric: Very well, go ahead.

Oswald: Now formerly, until not so long ago, buying and selling, and everything we mean by *business,* were considered not to be occupations for a gentleman; they were reprehensible, necessary but suspect, and all the better people pretended that such things didn't happen at all. The reason for

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this, we find when we go back in the tradition, was that the gentleman's occupations had always been conceived of simply as love and war. Poetry too, for this reason, and because it was read largely by gentlemen, concerned itself with love and war. And what happened then?

Osric: You're telling me, I'm not telling you. Go on.

Oswald: Buying and selling, because they were necessary, finally became gentlemanly, until now, at the present time, it is believed that these precisely, and especially if conducted on a very grand scale, are fit occupations for a gentleman—if only because a gentleman must have money, and there is practically no other way of ensuring a steady supply. So buying and selling have become respectable, and, more important than that, they are rapidly becoming total, and soon, if the present trend continues (which it will), they will become absolutely the form of morality.

Osric: And what a morality. I spit.

Oswald: That is a very poetical attitude you take. And I observe that, like a true poet, you say "I spit" but you don't spit; a world of significance there. For all practical purposes you could put it this way: that the gentlemen, who were accustomed to having poets celebrate their doings, simply hired a new lot of poets when they saw that the old poets wouldn't celebrate. The new poets were pretty awful; not only were they untrained and without competence in a difficult art, but also they were set to work inventing a new kind of poetry to suit the age, since the real poets had refused to bother with the age. They are doing it on the whole very badly still, I admit, but getting better.

Osric: Ingenious enough, and interesting. But how can you "get better" at selling, say, cigarettes? Doesn't the product, in its ineffable dreariness, impose a very low ceiling on your lyrical flights?

Oswald: I may remind you here that you and your critical colleagues have been telling us for years that subject is of no importance, while imagination is everything. Granted imagination enough, a fine poem may be produced upon a trivial or disgusting subject—isn't that how the old critical song has been going? At any rate, your belief about the true nature of advertising is quite as naive as my belief that poetry has something to do with the true and the beautiful. Do you seriously believe that advertising is primarily interested in *selling things?*

Osric: I had heard it mentioned.

Oswald: It is a vulgar error of the age. The kind of advertising you must mean still exists, of course, in great quantities—people selling one another souvenir salt-shakers, bronzed baby-shoes, rupture appliances, holy water in plastic tears, and so on up the line to liqueurs and luggage and limousines. But that is advertising directed at the consumer, and compares with real advertising as limericks do with iliads. Major modern advertising, like your major modern poetry, goes right over the heads of the private consumers and straight to the elite. How many readers of a news magazine, for instance, are really listening when the ball-bearing manufacturer spreads over a full page his delicate mating call to the maker of aircraft? Or when a utilities company expounds for two pages the strong and subtle bond of metaphor that connects utilities with democracy, what has that to do with your private citizen? No, such advertisements are as privileged as private correspondence, as secure as messages in cipher, as haughty in their doings as any poetry.

Osric: But still selling things, really, aren't they?

Oswald: You're still not altogether clear about the vast differences separating major and revolutionary advertising from the rest. You're still thinking about mere material commodities—it doesn't matter whether they are corsets or rocket-planes—while I want you to lift up your mind to spiritual things, that is, to the Way of Life, the Truth and Beauty which make buying and selling possible. For example, we used to sell refrigerators; but now we have realized that if we sell The Way of Life refrigerators will follow in great plenty—and I will go further than that....

Osric: I am afraid you will.

Oswald: Please treat this as a confidence, will you? What I am about to describe has not yet come to pass. Presently, you see, we shall have double-crossed the manufacturers along with everyone else.

Osric: We?

Oswald: We of the advertising world. They thought they were making use of us, did all those small-minded *practical* men, when all the while we were making use of them, trying our wings until we should be ready to fly away. Advertising, which began as practical magic, now becomes spiritual and contemplative, autonomous magic, having its end in itself, just as poetry, which you will agree began as

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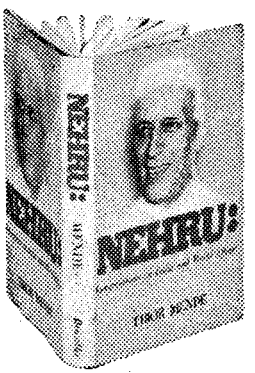

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practical magic, with curses and charms and casting of spells, at last became spiritual and contemplative and by definition impractical, and turned inward upon itself. Advertising has mirrored itself long enough in the material world of commerce and production, and now begins to turn inward to contemplation....

Osric: Staring at its own soft center.

Oswald: Go on, laugh while you can. But the thing is clearly happening. I foresee the time—for advertising-men, you see, are vaticinators now, just as poets used to be said to be—I foresee the time, not far in the future, when advertisement will have driven all editorial content from magazine and newspaper. As various heavy industries combine, and as all heavy industry combines with government, all human relations will be expressible as buying and selling....

Osric: But I thought you said....?

Oswald: There's no contradiction. When all human relations are expressible in market values, as buying and selling, there will be no need to talk about buying and selling, since that language will look as natural as the language of traditional morality does now. In the same way, when advertising becomes the total content of human communication, as you will allow it is very near to doing already, there will be no need to use the somewhat pejorative word "advertising," since other modes of speech will simply have ceased to exist. Moreover, on account of the very complex coordination of interests as between industries themselves on the one hand, and industry and political power and armed force and education on the other, the advertising writer will develop a much greater freedom in his point of view, simply because everything will be, to the ordinary reader, so dreadfully mixed up.

Osric: Quite as usual, in other words. You claim to be describing the future, but as you speak I keep seeing the present. What about this "ordinary reader," by the way? The people, as distinct from those who are so mighty in the buying and selling which you define as the essence of society to come?

Oswald: The people? I hate to say it, because I'm as good an American as yourself, but I imagine some condition of light and not very unpleasant servitude will be found for the people. They must, of course, continue to buy and sell, and as they are for the most part already convinced that in buying and selling consists the true meaning of earthly life, I imagine they will have little hardship in adjusting to the last turns of the vise. And their priests, as usual, will assist them in the perception that it is all somehow right and necessary. Their God has been made over in the image of a great businessman; well, now He will become a great advertising-man.

Osric: In the end will be the Word.

Oswald: Very poetically and aptly put.

Osric: You make it very clear. As the private interest covers the public interest, as the line between advertising and propaganda becomes indistinct, and both discover ever more *recherché* ways of skinning their cats, advertising will become, for one thing, less imperative and more declarative, less urgent and more leisured, less hortatory and more contemplative.

Oswald: Like poetry.

Osric: Yes, and I think I see further than that. There will develop an advertising class, or caste, with hereditary succession, as distinct as the class of scribes in ancient Egypt or China, and this class will have altogether in its hands the composition of odes describing, in a highly specialized way, the mysteries on which subsists the mystical body of society: the sinews of metaphor uniting, for example, the university with the debutante with the railroad with contraception with the concrete mixer with high tariffs with race prejudice with universities with debutantes—

Oswald: Stop, you are being carried away. But yes, that is more or less the way it will work out, though I suppose we shall not live to see it.

Osric: Being a vaticinator in my turn, and one, moreover, who is wise only after the event, I will tell you that we are already seeing it. Of course, even when your victory is complete, your stuff will always be deficient as poetry because it will have no real —that is, unsubsidized—acknowledgment of evil. But that will not be noticed, because all genuine poetry will by that time have disappeared.

Oswald: Ah, you *genuine* poets are proud. On that day, your heads will be the first to fall.

Osric: Our heads will have shriveled long before that day comes.

Oswald: If you would abandon your pride and save yourself, I might be able to find an opening for you with us. We can always use a man who has your skill with words. And you could write your poetry on the side, evenings and weekends.

Osric: Thank you ever so much. But really, and it's no matter of pride, I

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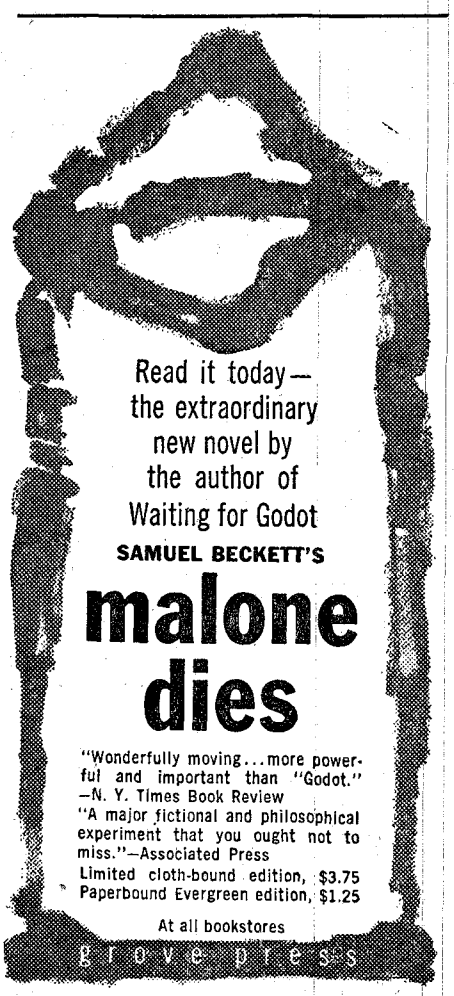

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can't believe I'd be talented enough for your kind of work.

Oswald: Oh, we'd start you off in a small way, of course. But you'd go quickly up the ladder, I'm sure of it, a man of your brilliance and sincerity and warmth of feeling. It's only a matter of learning to apply those fine human qualities to new objects. After all, as one of your own poets said at the very beginning of his career, "Words alone are certain good." And at the end of that career he also said, speaking directly to poets, "Sing whatever is well-made." Cigarettes these days are very well-made.

Osric: For a man in your line of work, you seem to know a lot of poetry.

Oswald: Ah, my dear man, that is my little secret. I was one of you once, but that is a long time ago. "Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme." Except I didn't, really, or not very well. But I'm certain you'd like it very well with us, we're not at all the vulgar, uncultivated boors that legend makes us out to be; most of the finest minds in the business belong to men who, like myself, started out to be poets. And of course, as our work has so much to do with truth and beauty, we keep ourselves in shape by much reading, and visits to art galleries.

Osric: Sounds like a very gloomy life to me. Art galleries remind me of undertakers' parlors, and I very rarely read books. When I hear the word "culture" I take a drink and the feeling passes.

Oswald: You know, I still write a little from time to time, though I don't like to mention it around the office. I was wondering if maybe you might look over some of my stuff, and tell me if you think it's good enough.

Osric: Good enough for what?

Oswald: To publish, I guess, what else?

Osric: But I'm not a publisher.

Oswald: No, you're a snob, that's what you are. No wonder the world doesn't care for your verse, since you persist in that snide attitude of yours. Suppose just for the sake of argument that my poetry turns out to be absolutely wonderful, that I really have something to say to the world?

Osric: I'm supposing as hard as I can. Why don't you say it, in that case? And I'll read your poems, if you care that much.

Oswald: Don't imagine I'm afraid of any criticism you might make. After all, my poems are only a hobby.

Osric: Do you see that bird over there?

Oswald: Certainly. It's only a robin.

Osric: Just so. And do you know that though it has been called a robin in English for so many centuries, that bird is so stupid it still doesn't know it is a robin?

Oswald: What are you driving at?

Osric: That is the meaning of poetry.

Oswald: You're only trying to puzzle me, you think it's a smart thing to do.

Osric: I will make my meaning clearer in a parable about poets and poetry, which I made up a long time ago, at a very bad time in my life when I thought that one ought not to do anything without having a clear idea of what it was for. This parable has sometimes comforted me in some odd manner, and perhaps it may do the same for you.

Oswald: Come on, then, get to it.

Osric: It is a parable about the monkish medieval poet Caedmon. Caedmon, a stupid man by nature, became a poet by divine visitation in sleep; waking, he found he could remember quite well the verses to the glory of the Creator which he had been inspired to sing the night before, and he wrote them down. He spent the rest of his life versifying passages from Scripture, which others had translated for him —the Exodus from Egypt, the Passion of Christ, and so on. Now, concerning all these things, which the present taste does not even find very beautiful, scholars now believe, first, that they were not written by Caedmon; second, that nothing from his hand has come down to us, and third, that no such person, it may be, ever lived. What remains, then? Poets ought to consider it well. There remains only the voice in the night: "Caedmon . . . sing the beginning of created things."

Oswald: I'll tell you what your trouble is. You not only don't communicate to an ordinary man like me, but you don't even want to communicate, that's your trouble, and so far as I'm concerned you can go die for it.

Osric: But there's more truth than poetry in that.

The Tower

There is the famous Babel Tower;
You'd think it had grown since yesterday.
We are the architects of that power:
Oh that the clouds would bear it away.
When our morning stint is done
We watch the mannikin sentries stand
Shoulder to shoulder with the sun
(They are like tribesmen of the air),
And view the geometrical line
Of shadow cutting in two our land.
What have we fashioned but a sign?
The earth's unending quarry strewn
With rough and smooth and wicked stone
To mount that gun aimed at the sky:
What have we made but an empty sign?
The archaic clouds pass slowly by.
Who are our masters? Who are you there?
We scarcely see you. May there come
A great wind from a stormier star,
Blow tower and shadow to kingdom come.

This is the old men's story. Once
Voices were there, resounding words
Of an incomprehensible tongue
Fit for great heroes and great lords,
Else never spoken anywhere.
And once a simple country song
Began and suddenly ended. Since
No message drops from the middle air
Except when a dead lord flutters down,
Light as a frozen and mummied fly,
From the perpendicular town.
They have no license there to die.
We cannot bear to scan that face,
Cover in haste the unchristened head,
Heap rubble and boulders on the place.
We too die. So look the dead
Whose breath stopped on a different star.
Who are they? We are what we are.

EDWIN MUIR

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The Higher and Higher Criticism

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES. A Magazine for a Democracy of Content. Vol. 8. 40 cents. *THE CRITICAL PERFORMANCE.* An Anthology of American and British Literary Criticism of our Century. Edited by Stanley Edgar Hyman. Vintage Books, 95 cents. *THEORY OF LITERATURE.* By René Wellek and Austin Warren. Harvest Books. $1.65. *SOCIETY AND SELF IN THE NOVEL.* Edited by Mark Schorer. Columbia University Press. $3.50. *THE RADICAL NOVEL IN THE UNITED STATES, 1900-1954.* By Walter B. Rideout. Harvard Univrsity Press. $6. *THE HISTORY OF A LITERARY RADICAL AND OTHER PAPERS.* By Randolph Bourne. Harbor Press. $3.75. *THE MIRROR IN THE ROADWAY.* A Study of the Modern Novel. By Frank O'Connor. Alfred A. Knopf. $4.50. *ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL.* By E. M. Forster. Harvest Books. $1.15. *OUR LITERARY HERITAGE.* A Pictorial History of the Writer in America. By Van Wyck Brooks and Otto Bettmann. Dutton. $8.50.

By Maxwell Geismar

WHAT IS happening to criticism in the Age of Criticism? A group of English writers in the pages of this magazine have already commented on the "Establishment" and the "Outsiders" in their country. But over here, where the dominant critical school is more solidly established, and even worse I think, the voices of protest have been muted or silent. To be sure, Van Wyck Brooks, the "grand old man" of our criticism, has been waging a kind of guerrilla warfare against the New Critics. The young firebrand, John Aldridge, has just delivered another blast at them, though from an exposed rampart. But Malcolm Cowley has expressed only some mild rebuke lately, while Edmund Wilson, who might have taken the leadership here, has wandered off to the Red Sea—no, the Dead Sea—and all the others are safely entrenched in the universities and academies.

For a literary movement that professes no interest in "economics," the New Criticism is surprisingly well organized, with its chains of communication running from the colleges to the dominant literary magazines (*Kenyon, Hudson, Partisan* reviews, etc.), to the foundations and fellowships. It could be called a literary monopoly. Starting originally as a reaction to the Marxist criticism of the 1930s, still under the shadow of Ezra Pound's disjointed fascism and T. S. Eliot's clerical royalism, it has been developed in this country mainly by romantic Southern conservatives like Allen Tate and Robert Penn Warren. Another branch of what is almost an interlocking directorate includes the literary ex-Communists seeking refuge in pure criticism; and such hesitant humanists as Lionel Trilling, who now represent the "Liberal Mind."

In the cross-section of critical volumes now under consideration, there is an interesting debate in the little magazine called *Contemporary Issues* (London and New York) as to the amount of fascism in this general movement and the poetry it advocates. But the New Criticism also expresses an open abhorrence of "politics," except for its own advancement. Its central concern is the pure "work of art," interpreted by a textual criticism that has become increasingly elaborate and ingenious; bulwarked by a massive scholarship, medieval and scholastic in essence; and restricting its activities to a selected canon of "acceptable" authors upon whom the hosts of younger new critics descend *en masse*—like an armored battalion of literary technicians, equipped with the strongest firing power of "image, metaphor and myth."

MAXWELL GEISMAR, a contributing editor to The Nation, *is the author of* Rebels and Ancestors, The Last of the Provincials, Writers in Crisis *and other critical studies.*

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By SAMUEL J. KONEFSKY

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There is value in this close textual criticism, but there is also a point where it reaches an apex of fantastic intellectual virtuosity, of self-enclosed sterility. That is the impression one gets, at any rate, from Mr. Hyman's new critical anthology, prepared especially for the Vintage books, as a supplement to his earlier volume called *The Armed Vision:* an impression, in Mr. Hyman's case, of sublime complacency with everything contained in the volume. "We see the endless fertility of Aristotle in the Auden and Fergusson essays," he says, "and get some sense of the territories uncharted by Aristotle (we might name them 'Plato') in Buchanan and Richards." We also see the uncharted territories of Mr. Hyman's own thought which we might name as legion.

NOW I confess that I am morbidly drawn to and fascinated by this vision of life and art in the middle of the twentieth century, and I only wish I could quote Mr. Hyman in greater detail as the best unconscious exponent of the Higher and Higher Criticism today. At the same time, he says, after having added Frazer to Aristotle and Plato, as the three central influences of "Modern Criticism"—God forbid—at the same time, the ultimate concern of all these critics is—here we go—the text itself, the pure work of art; and here the critics "sing in splendid concert." And so they do, since there is no question of their intelligence, learning or dedication to their craft—but only of the purpose to which they are putting their talent.

This purpose, however, Mr. Hyman praises, with never an undertone of doubt or speculation, in a cantata of pious approval opening this splendid critical concert. The ten American critics represented in his anthology, hail from "such unlikely cultural founts as Idaho and New Mexico, Missouri and Kentucky," but there may be some significance, he says, "in the fact that they all went to school in the East, and at least four attended Oxford, three as Rhodes scholars." There surely is significance in this fact, or in the fact that Mr. Hyman makes it significant; but just what significance, I leave to you. And the worst of it is that Mr. Hyman, for all his devout allegiance to the critical cause, is not even a perfectly pure new critic. He includes an essay by Constance Rourke on the American scene—*though it is on our Indian rituals.* He includes psychoanalytical critics like Empson, and a couple of outsiders like Herbert Read, and even the obsolete Marxist, Christopher Caudwell, as a warning.

Messrs. Wellek and Warren, in their *Theory of Literature,* an older work now reprinted in the paperbacks, would surely not accept even such faint hints of subversion. If Mr. Hyman's anthology is a perfect example of critics who match up to the highest standards of the new criticism, Wellek and Warren have put out what is surely the standard text of the formalist group. And here, I should say, "psychology" is added to the list of taboo subjects, along with history and biography. Out with them all. The writer's temperament, assuming we could know something about it, which Messrs W. and W. purely doubt, has no more to do with his writing than does the society or environment he inhabits. These factors, along with the history of ideas, and the relationship of literature to the other arts, are all part of the "extrinsic approach" in criticism, described here as hardly to be condoned.

What is left for the critic to deal with? Since Wellek and Warren use the first hundred pages of their treatise to dispose of the things that must *not* be mentioned, let me add hastily that they are not concerned with novelists either, or novels, but with the *theory* of the novel; and not even with the emotions of literature, but "the feelings of emotions, the perceptions of emotions." And what is most curious here is the tone of bland authoritarianism with which these esthetic principles and laws are handed down as the future methodology for all graduate schools of English—which will not include human beings, I suppose, and certainly not anybody who wants to write a creative work of fiction, but only teachers, or the images of teachers.

How far has this influence already spread, with its formidable scholarship, its yearning for absolutes in scientific esthetics, its passion for abstraction? *Society and Self in the Novel,* edited by Mark Schorer, shows some familiar symptoms of this whole configuration of the higher and higher criticism. There is, of

Wind

This house has been far out at sea all night,
The woods crashing through darkness, the booming hills,
Winds stampeding the fields under the window
Floundering black astride and blinding wet

Till day rose; then under an orange sky
The hills had new places, and wind wielded
Blade-light, luminous black and emerald
Flexing like the lens of a mad eye.

At noon I scaled along the house-side as far as
The coal-house door. I dared once to look up—
Through the brunt wind that dented the balls of my eyes
The tent of the hills drummed and strained its guyrope,

The fields quivering, the skyline a grimace,
At any second to bang and vanish with a flap:
The wind flung a magpie away and a black-
Back gull bent like an iron bar slowly. The house

Rang like a fine green goblet in the note
That any second would shatter it. Now deep
In chairs, in front of the great fire, we grip
Our hearts and cannot entertain book, thought,

Or each other. We watch the fire blazing,
And feel the roots of the house move, but sit on,
Seeing the window tremble to come in,
Hearing the stones cry out under the horizon.

TED HUGHES

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course, the familiar essay on Proust by Fred Dupee, who must be becoming almost as tired of his single subject as F. O. Matthiessen became at the end of Henry James. Then there are two more essays on James Joyce. Mr. Schorer himself uses the worst parts of one of the worst novels by Sinclair Lewis to illustrate the American novelist's "method of half-truths."

Yet Mr. Schorer in his own way is one of the few critics of this school who seems to have a genuine interest in the conflict between society and the individual that has created the tension, and the tragedy, for so many great novels of the past. For the rest of these critics society, as a vital force, is so far beyond the horizon of art—or at least of criticism—that it hardly seems to exist. This is certainly the extreme point of the 19th century revolt of the Symbolists—and the Dadaists, after them—who protested against the framework of a materialistic and scientific civilization which excluded human and artistic values. But here, in a curious reversal of values, both society and humanity have disappeared from criticism, while "science" and "reason" conduct an autopsy on the corpse of literature.

In the closed circuit of "proper" subjects for these critics (I have forgotten to mention Yeats) even the name of Sinclair Lewis appears as a surprise. He is one of the few living American authors—well, I mean one not as long dead as Melville—who has entered, though so unfavorably, the new critical arcana. The New Criticism—which is in fact now old, established, and utterly respectable—has no concern with any sort of truly creative new literature. Like the academic scholarship of the 1900s, like the neo-humanists of the 1930s, it is both ignorant of and contemptuous towards its own native literary tradition. ("But I just can't *read* Dreiser," I heard one of these aficionados declare lately.) And what strikes one finally about this whole critical tendency is how completely it reflects, in the spiritual area, the worst aspects of the American society it has repudiated.

It *is* that society—with its empha-

The Two Sisters

Her beauty was so rare,
It wore her body down
With leading through the air
That marvel not her own.
At last to set it free
From enmity of change
And time's incontinence
To drink from beauty's bone,
Snatching her last defense,
She locked it in the sea.

The other, not content
That fault of hers should bring
Grief and mismanagement
To make an end of grace
And snap the slender ring,
Pulled death down on her head,
Completed destiny.
So each from her own place,
These ladies put to sea
To join the intrepid dead.

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sis on abstraction and techniques, rather than human values; with its conspicuous consumption of scholarship and learning; with its mass-minded and "other-directed" stress on esthetic concepts and laws; with its yearning for refinement and "culture" in art, at the expense of all vitality and life. One remembers that the robber barons also ransacked the treasures of medieval Europe to adorn their gothic mansions; turned Episcopal for the rites, like T. S. Eliot; collected Oriental miniatures, like Ezra Pound; and then showed the way for what their esthetic grandchildren are now doing in the area of the literary trusts, combines and monopolies. Shades of Thorstein Veblen—and perhaps of Mamie Eisenhower! For there are disturbing echoes not merely of the past but of the present age in the prevailing distraction and euphoria of our fashionable school of criticism today. While the crucial and revolutionary issues of our time are being fought out in the dark, and the human race may be getting ready to be atomized, it almost seems that the real function of the New Criticism is to keep our best young intellectuals absorbed with their playthings, no matter what happens to the nation or the world.

SO, AT the opposite pole of the critical volumes under present survey, Walter Rideout's *The Radical Novel in the United States* comes almost from the void. Was there a radical novel in this country, and what happened to it? Mr. Rideout himself presents his theme under the guise of sober scholarship. His method is that of the social historian rather than the literary critic proper. His rather narrow definition of "radical" as something apart from the main stream of the progressive reform movement in our society and literature during the last fifty years —Upton Sinclair and Jack London; but not Norris, Howells or Dreiser at their best—minimizes the real scope of his survey.

Still, this is a solid, informative and interesting history of an area in our cultural history which is often ignored by conventional historians. I can do no better than to urge you to read it; and then take a look at Randolph Bourne's *History of a Literary Radical* to see some of the social influences which brought about the second great revival of our literature in the 1920s. Influences, I repeat, that the New Criticism has not the slightest knowledge of or concern with. Nor does it concern itself with a possible third revival of creative literature in the United States for which the first step must be to break through the formidable establishment of this critical school in our literary places of power.

Perhaps that is why the last three books in the present survey, all written from the middle ground of criticism, which is the human, the enduring ground of all good criticism, are so particularly welcome today. Frank O'Connor's *The Mirror in the Roadway* is a sometimes deliberately perverse defence of the respectable nineteenth century middle-class European novel against the onslaughts of twentieth century decadence and neo-barbarism. He uses no jargon, no carefully delimited standards of esthetic value—excuse me, I mean "frames of reference." He even calls Naturalism an extreme of realism, which it is, when you come down to it. And his portraits of the great nineteenth century masters of fiction, English, Russian and French, are acute, sympathetic, enlightening.

His object is simply to get into the minds and hearts of the writers whose work he describes, and I can think of nothing better, or more difficult, for a critic to do. The present reprint of E. M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel,* a celebrated work now at a moderate price, certainly invokes the same literary "principle." "Perhaps we ought to define what a novel is before starting. This will not take a second," Forster says. And he paraphrases the French critic who declared that a novel is "a fiction in prose of a certain extent." Finally, I must confess that the last book on the list, *Our Literary Heritage,* is not even so scientific as O'Connor and Forster. It is in fact a picture book of American writers and their settings, taken from the famous Bettmann Archive of illustrations in New York, with a selected text from Van Wyck Brooks' five-volume history, *Makers and Finders.* But there is one picture of Henry James in a top hat, while every other reputable Englishman in sight wears a derby, that justifies the whole project.

Now I wonder if the New Critics have thought of using x-rays.

Binding The Dragon

"The dragon's Proteus. He must be fought
And fighting dragons is my holy joy,"
The poet says, although he may look caught
And blood is spurting from one eye.

"Sublimate," says the cautious analyst.
The poet answers, "Let him do it first.
Look, I have got this dragon in my fist.
I'll hold him there until he dies of thirst."

But suddenly the dragon flows away.
The dragon is a river: you can't do it,
Hold up a river in your hands all day.
"And what is sublimation?" asks the poet.

"Is it to translate water into fire?
Is it to follow birds along the air?
Is it to be the master of desire,
Or ride a cycle with no handlebar?

Gentle a dragon to lie quiet there,
Beautiful in his power but asleep,
Image of dragon resting on the air?"
The poet asked, and then began to weep.

He did not want the dragon to be caught.
He wanted it alive and in his fist.
For who would kill the god with whom he fought?
And so he wept and cursed the analyst.

MAY SARTON

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New Age of the Baroque

THE TIGHTROPE WALKERS. By Giorgio Melchiori. The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

By Katherine Hoskins

IN HIS introduction to this collection of essays on twentieth century literature, Professor Melchiori presents an interesting thesis: that the "anxious" art of the early half of the century is evolving more balanced and self-dependent forms and may very well culminate in a new Baroque. He hopes that as our "age of anxiety" was discerned by writers some time before it was apparent to the ordinary man, so this new development may prophesy a more stable era on its way. Though rather prolix and given to repetition, Signor Melchiori's voice is a pleasing addition to the conversation of critics. He is perceptive and immensely read, and if his statements do not always fall on the ear like truth, they are usually arguable.

Funambulist is the term he prefers for this "anxious" or, as he otherwise calls it, Manneristic art that is changing. The word has wonderful overtones of sleep-walking and of the frail and haunted saltimbanques of Picasso. Considered thus, it seems entirely suited to define a kind of book that has appeared frequently enough in the last fifty years (often from Eastern Europe) to constitute a genre of writing peculiar to our time. But our author has quite other writings in mind to illustrate "the achievement of the true artist of our age who, like the successful acrobat, succeeds in keeping step by step, moment by moment, his balance while being aware of the void or turmoil round him." He chooses, in fact, two notably wide-awake and sturdy writers, Hopkins and James, wherewith to commence his investigations.

The juxtaposition is surprising. But he establishes a link through Pater and fixes the two as alone of their own time and as forerunners of ours: both ". . . showing how a genuine intellectual power can sustain and make acceptable also extreme exercises in artistry." Here we find ourselves on a little tightrope of our own. Having provisionally discounted the vast differences in the cumulative meanings of Hopkins and James in favor of demonstrated stylistic similarities, we would like to step along as soon as possible to find out how they "exercised a parallel action on prose and poetry and on that far reaching exploration of human consciousness which is an achievement of this century."

The "parallel action" remains unexplored. Yet this essay remains one of the most satisfactory in the book; perhaps because Signor Melchiori's gift for annotation is given the fresh-

KATHERINE HOSKINS is a poet, critic and short story writer. A volume of her poetry, Villa Narcisse, *was published earlier this year.*

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ness of the unexpected by his two subjects. The choice also suggests a width of application of his theories that the rest of the book does not fulfill. Of the ten essays, three deal with Eliot and he is a King Charles' head for all except this first. Nor, though ubiquitous, is Eliot made use of as a unifying thread. And we badly want some thread or force that would lead us to accept the term Funambulist and apply it to "the true artist of our age"; and lead us to our promised end in the Baroque.

We follow along, however, to three essays that deal with literary influences on *Ulysses, The Waste Land,* and *Four Quartets.* Ever since J. L. Lowes' *The Road to Xanadu,* such excursions have been good critical fun. And they may be rewarding enough so long as they are kept bookish and so long as the critic does not delude himself that when so occupied he is, to quote Signor Melchiori, "actually meandering through the mind of a poet." By this method, he comes up with some very interesting resemblances between Joyce and the Eighteenth century novelists, especially Sterne. But it seems that even quasi-certainty in such matters must disappear when we come to so common and ancient and self-renewing a symbol as the rose. For all our professor's erudition, it remains problematical if Eliot was remembering D. H. Lawrence's roses, Jean de Meung's, the rose he had just finished looking at in his own garden, or none of these, or all and more besides.

ALREADY over-weighted with Eliot, Signor Melchiori's own rope slackens dangerously when he turns his attention to Christopher Fry and Henry Green. Not only are we asked to consider Fry as a "popular" (as well as money-making) dramatist; but to bestow on his work and on Green's charming Viennese tortes the same weight of scrutiny that we give to Joyce's work or to James'. He later says that in a work of art, ". . . we should distinguish clearly between its absolute artistic value on the one side, and its formal characteristics on the other." In these two essays as well as in the one on "Eliot and the Theatre," the historian's complaisance is often at variance with the stricter evaluations of the man of taste and letters.

Both come happily together, however, and also get us going toward the promised conclusion in an excellent examination of the very conscious and responsible poetry of Dylan Thomas. Signor Melchiori refuses, though, to designate it as Baroque because it does not achieve "the final sense of repose, of balance and completeness which a Baroque work of art reveals when surveyed as a whole." It may be that he is right, but I would have given Thomas the title out of hand. Or, possibly, this is a matter of definition. In *The Life of Forms in Art,* Henri Focillon says of the Baroque, ". . . this architecture of movement assumes the qualities of wind, of flame and of light; it moves within a fluid space."

Having watched him deny a prime contestant, it is hard not to feel slightly outraged when Signor Melchiori announces that we are to find the outlines of the new Baroque in Thomas' prose play *Under Milkwood,* in Fry's *The Dark Is Light Enough* and in Eliot's *The Confidential Clerk.* Mice—after so great labor! Even accepting our author's definition, what repose and balance we find in these seem scarcely of a new form waiting for its call to life and triumph.

The Unconsenting Spirit

By M. L. Rosenthal

I can prove it by Max Nordau. They poison the minds of young girls.
—Kenneth Fearing

The communists have fine Eyes.
—E. E. Cummings

With a deep sigh
The unconsenting spirit fled to the shades below.
—Publius Vergilius Maro
(translated by C. Day Lewis)

IT IS almost a popular sport to ask, concerning poetry—and particularly concerning that of our own country: "What's it all about?" Unfortunately, it is even more popular to turn on one's heel smartly without staying for answer; or, worse than Herod, to disregard all answers and simply to repeat the question over and over. One of the famous unheeded answers, Marianne Moore's, begins with equal disingenuousness: "I, too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle." But granting the disingenuousness, it remains true that even the professional poet and critic recognize in themselves the irritated dismay that unfamiliar poetry—*good* poetry—can at first sight arouse. Another call to the abyss! Another reordering of life and disconcertment of the intelligence! Hence the slipperiness of so many hasty reviews, the easy praise and easier condemnation. And hence, no doubt, the general resistance.

That resistance is to the self quite as much as to the poem—the dark, subversive, inward self that accepts no authority, the ego in love with the id and shouting "leggo!" to the superego. The greater the poet's skill and integrity, often, the stronger will be our resistance, for the more insidious is the threat of nameless disaster: cancellation of appointments, emptying out of pockets, disappearance into a Bowery or charnel-house of anonymous, ghostly, shabby horror. Yet despite everything a nagging need persists, smothered though it be into near-silence, to keep this dangerous fellow close at hand. We shall certainly want, at *some* time—but of course not just now!—to face these fears of ours and try to see things whole and clear. And so we conjure up an absurd vision, a makeshift compromise between our sentimental pretenses and the reality we feel; and the poet, since he does want to be heard, at whatever cost, almost, is to some degree actually forced to live up to it.

We picture a vast arena to which he and his ragged cohorts have carried a tangerine-crate to stand on

M. L. ROSENTHAL is poetry editor of The Nation.

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and a drooping pirate flag to hoist. All around them mill the multitudes, intent yet aimless, listening in some vague manner to voices drifting down from the mile-high rostrums of authority, then pausing for split seconds to cheer or hoot the speakers ballooning there far up above. Gusty, full of cinders, a wind blows through the forum. The poet, poised jauntily on the cracking slats of his fragile crate, sings out his message, which the wind thins and crumbles as it bears it away. The youthful Trotsky must have looked like this! His hair and beard, and the sporty, belted suit jacket tied by the arms around his neck, blow romantically about his head.

But who can really hear him? Hardly anyone. An occasional bit of melody or flashing image comes through. Still, unless we stand closer than most of us can do if we're serious about our milling, we don't quite get it—and we wonder, does *he?* Why that facetious note in his voice, as though he were amused and baffled by his own words? We trust the assurances of politicians and of television announcers, because we know they lie and oversimplify and because we know why they do so. But the poet offers, not their frank evasions, but an evasive frankness like that of our own deepest thoughts. It is something we prefer to put off attending to until later. The false certainties floating down from the public rostrums make no such demand on innermost assent, do not require that we reopen everything for reexamination at once.

A WARNING now: I have been talking about the *resistance* to poetry and the reasons for it, not about that famous "obscurity" so often, with implications of fakery and general malfeasance, charged against it. The latter subject has been too much dignified by debate, in my opinion. The logic of poetic association is available to any literate person willing to adapt his thought to what the poet is doing without insisting on his own set and patterned expectations. He must not tell Shakespeare what to see in a skull unearthed by gravediggers or Eliot what to see in a crab grasping the end of a stick. The poetry itself, not the reader's own memory, is what gives such "sights" their precise symbolism. Openness of response and an absence of drudging, humorless literalness are as necessary here as in other realms of intellectual and imaginative activity. There remains, of course, poetry that is genuinely difficult. The effort to convey complex and subtle states of awareness, like the effort to give new life to old perspectives, may put almost as great a burden on reader as on poet. With such writing especially, an active sympathy is needed, and the better the reader the greater the poet's good fortune and the greater his challenge will be.

Nor am I concerned with the argument, inevitably put forward by people who have not read many of the particular poems involved, that modern poetry is merely negative, alienated, and "pessimistic." All poetry is affirmation in some sort, though it may cut painfully into the bone so as to affirm the marrow. Yet poetic affirmation even at its simplest, as in most of Longfellow, will have *some* of the mystery of the more difficult moderns:

> I heard the trailing garments of the Night
> Sweep through her marble halls!

According to René Char, the poet is a person of "unilateral stability"; that is, he makes something unique out of universals—common, traditional, or objectively real materials—by transmuting them into aspects of the microcosm that is himself. In the process his particular sensibility moves into the foreground and becomes the determining element; it is this creative alchemy, I think, which makes poetic speech normative—something that at once reveals the terrible silent poverty of most lives and the vast richness which is ours for the asking, and thus sets a desirable standard. Who would not wish to be able to communicate love and its heightenings of awareness as Richard Wilbur does in "The Beautiful Changes":

> One wading a Fall meadow finds on all sides
> The Queen Anne's Lace lying like lilies
> On water; it glides
> So from the walker, it turns
> Dry grass to a lake, as the slightest shade of you
> Valleys my mind in fabulous blue Lucernes.

The other side of the ability so to communicate is absolute candor in the recognition of things as they are. Thus Richard Eberhart on death:

> I saw on the slant hill a putrid lamb,
> Propped with daisies. The sleep looked deep,

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The face nudged in the green pillow
But the guts were out for the crows
to eat.

The "unilateral stability" of poets and other artists depends on absolute freedom, within their own natural limits, for the play of intellect, sense-response and feeling over any subject whatsoever. There is no necessary alienation involved in such free play, but the motivation is independent, the direction the poet's own; in the language of Horace Gregory's translation from Catullus:

I shall not raise my hand to please
you, Caesar,
nor do I care whether you are white
or black.

Now a Caesar might well choose to consider such declarations subversive, and from one viewpoint, perhaps, the San Francisco mayor (wasn't it?) who closed down *Lysistrata* and sent out the cops to "get this guy Aristophanes" was right; and so was his most distinguished predecessor, Socrates. It was Socrates' contention—or at any rate, Plato's—that you can't trust poets. Poets feel themselves god-inspired when sometimes they're merely wrong, and they hawk as revealed truths all sorts of suspect attitudes that do not tally with the pretensions of the State, ideally conceived. Their poems *are,* we concede, full of blood-loyalty, and from their unmobilized spirits they speak with a mockery of voice such as can disconcert even a philosopher-king and make him think them either frivolous or else unpredictably hostile on some atavistic, tribal principle which can hardly be put into words. They are obsessed with beast-images, with forbidden divinities, with the sexual power underlying all of life. Celebrants of the female or kinship principle, they will not hew to the Golden Lie that the State is the new order of the family and hierarchy the new order of the heart. Even a monarch-sanctioned poet like Virgil, singer of empire and officially instituted religion, will without warning betray a pang of sympathy with the old way of things, the way of local deities and of kinship rather than imperial loyalties. At the very last gasp of *The Aeneid,* he finds himself constrained to show that his heart is somehow, after all, with the "unconsenting spirits," his hero's enemies, now relegated to the nether shades. After the "deep sigh" of the dying Turnus, as earlier after the tragic disdain of the abandoned Dido in Hades, there is nothing but silence to defend "pious Aeneas."

The "mere" act of writing a poem with its own idiosyncratic life would be evidence enough of the *un-* or *sub-* or *epi*-official sources of that act. It is a freely performed ritualization of an awareness and an attitude; when it swears its allegiances in advance, the consequences are as self-defeating as Yeats shows Cuchulain's oath to Conchubar to have been in *On Baile's Strand*: the loss of spontaneous meaning, filicide, tragedy without end.

IN modern poetry, we are more and more presented with the need to counteract the self-betrayal of a culture. "The pure products of America," writes Dr. Williams, "go crazy":

No one
to witness
and adjust, no one to drive the car

The prevailing argument is that, in submitting to organization, institutionalization, and mechanization for their own sake we are in danger of losing touch with the springs of joy and vitality: delight of the senses, tradition and ritual, self-realization within a truly human context. Randall Jarrell's "A Girl in a Library" shows a typical "Home Ec." or "Phys. Ed." major asleep in a college reading-room. His satire is tempered by compassion for this innocent victim of her times who might at least, in another age, have been one of the anonymous "braided maidens singing as they spin." The poem concludes:

. . . and I have seen
Firm, fixed forever in your closing
eyes,
The Corn King beckoning to his
Spring Queen.

Our poetry of the twenties and the thirties might almost be described as a concerted effort to re-establish vital continuities with the past—with the myth-making, wonder-contemplating, strength-giving sources in the past, not with its better-known evils—and to achieve a kind of cultural breakthrough for the creative sensibility in search of widened, fresher meanings. From *The Waste Land* to Muriel Rukeyser's *Elegies,* from Pound's *The Return* to Crane's self-analyses, the spectacular psychological struggle for such continuity and breakthrough made for a richly varied yet unified literature. The poetry was necessarily, if usually incidentally, *anti* in many respects:

Reactionary History

Madam, we had our Modern Age at first,
And liberally saw our Freedom grow accurst.

Then our Romantic Era, when you wept
The day that you had let yourself be kept.

In th'enlightened Age of Reason next,
We were a little cruel, but otherwise unsexed,

Till a briefest Renaissance, dying in Passion,
Came near to canceling our Reformation.

Now stern Morality as it may assuages
In the long prospect of our Middle Ages,

Until we may, by penitent Affliction,
In Nature's course revoke the Crucifixion,

While th'insolent monuments of Rome
By slow Degrees sink back into the loam.

Whether in Eden then, or th'Isles of Greece,
We may achieve Antiquity's release,

And by Forgiveness or Oblivion
Build up an Egypt where Time's not begun.

HOWARD NEMEROV

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anti-war, anti-commercial, anti-authoritarian. (Even the revolutionary poetry of the Depression turns out to be in the main anarcho-individualistic, Freudian, and more in the image of D. H. Lawrence than of V. I. Lenin.) Hence perhaps—in addition to the facts of life themselves—our image of the unheard orator with his drooping flag of piracy. But at his best the poet-orator, whether he descants on apeneck Sweeney, or on the revolutionists stopping for a glass of orangeade, or on "the immovable critic twitching his skin like a horse that feels a flea," has with Democritus the gifts of laughter and of faith in human possibility that the gods are likely to grant unusually thoughtful and concerned minds.

In the course of the past fifteen years the premises which modern poets once fought to establish have been taken for granted by their younger contemporaries although many of their potential readers had not yet got around to reading them but were still saying "I don't get it" and "What's it all about?" A movement of quiet liberation from specific formulas and stances of the twenties and thirties has been under way too, despite the fact that the same potential readers were still "worrying," with the same inattentive insouciance, over Cummings' typographical designs and whether or not *vers libre* is *vers véritable*. But because whatever is seen with fresh eyes and felt with immediacy will seem unorthodox, because prevailing manners and systems are always cumbersome approximations to situations already obsolete while the liveliest minds dance among discrepancies, ironies, possibilities—all the lights and darks, truths and pretensions, of life and death—the gap between what the poets are saying and doing at any given time and what the common reader imagines they say and do seems inevitable. Now if we say further that this gap is itself one of the major poetic motifs, then we have at one and the same moment come upon the greatest clue of all to this phenomenon of "subversion" 'mid the dithyrambs and upon the real significance thereof.

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

CHEKHOV'S *The Sea Gull,* for some reason I cannot determine exactly, splinters into fragments in the new production at the Fourth Street Theatre. Some of the fragments still reveal the beauty of the whole: one cannot leave any production of this tender play without taking away from it some keen dart of true sentiment or the ray of some fine thought.

I have reviewed *The Sea Gull* too often to say anything further about it except to make two observations which occurred to me on this occasion. The difference between Chekhov's record of suffering embodied within the framework of domestic circumstance and most contemporary American writing in a similar vein is contained in a line which the doctor says of the other characters: "How hysterical they all are, and how much love." Recent writers have been long on hysteria and short on love.

There is love or at any rate a special sort of gallantry in the actors who play in this production. I refer not so much to their interpretation as such—though a few are good enough—but to the fact that Betty Field, Jacob Ben-Ami, Shepperd Strudwick, to mention only three of the better known members of the

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cast, will undertake difficult roles at what must of necessity be nominal salaries on a tiny stage awkwardly placed for the production of such a play—all for the sake of appearing in the work of a great modern dramatist. No other branch of the theatrical profession shows so many examples of devotion to it as the actors.

I SHALL reserve extended comment on the Old Vic season at the Winter Garden till I have seen more of their productions. Their *Romeo and Juliet* I found quite undistinguished. It pains me to say this because the Old Vic company is composed of excellent young people who generally work with fine ensemble spirit as well as being handsomely equipped for the task of presenting Shakespeare in intelligible and theatrically sound terms. Their *Henry IV*, which I saw in London two years ago was an admirable production. But *Romeo and Juliet* seemed to me so much posturing and reciting of set speeches with no character having any connection with any other.

TERENCE RATTIGAN is at the moment England's ablest playwright. In the tradition of the English stage from Pinero through Galsworthy and Maugham, no one in England today carries on as consistently, as deftly and as effectively as Mr. Rattigan. He is not only expert; his message is always modestly, gracefully and winningly on the side of the angels.

Separate Tables (Music Box Theatre) is one of his most successful plays. Its general theme is compassion for human error and frailty. More particularly the separate tables of the title are a symbol—through the instance of the dining room in a small second-rate provincial hotel—of loneliness.

The play consists of two parts with a slightly new focus in each case. In the first, a narcissistic woman cursed with an incapacity to give herself fully is finally accepted by her ex-husband whose frustrated passion for her is his own fatal weakness. But each needs the other and each must learn to sustain the other through that need. In the play's second part, two neurotically shy people—one a weak middle-aged man with a proclivity to compulsive sexual indiscretion, who passes himself off as a major and a man of exalted background; the other an almost pathologically inhibited lady of thirty-three—manage to reach beyond their disabilities and indirectly to give each other the courage to withstand more steadily the martyrdom of their isolated lives.

Around these four characters Rattigan traces a pattern of thumb-nail sketches of ordinary middle-class personages—easily recognizable, gently humorous. Everything in the play is sympathetic but nothing is surprising. If we follow the play with unabated interest it is due in part to the clean dexterity of Rattigan's technique and to his cordial feeling, and even in larger part to the extraordinary polish, sureness and sharpness of the acting performances, unimpeachably managed in Peter Glenville's direction.

The supporting company is very good, particularly so Beryl Measor who gives impressive substance to a somewhat trite character, but the burden of our attention is carried by Eric Portman, one of England's finest actors, and by the sinuous Margaret Leighton, another player who makes theatregoing in London a pleasure.

Portman has enormous, quiet power, the kind of concentration which makes the spectator follow his slightest gesture. His voice has an enviable sonority, with something reedy in it which saves it from being merely a "voice." He also has an acute sense of characterization based on reflective observation (the latter quality is equally evident in Miss Leighton's extremely vivid thirty-three year old maiden in the play's second section) and above all he executes every detail to the full extent of theatrical visibility within the conventions of the realistic theatre.

Yet paradoxically enough, *Separate Tables* is not realism either in writing or in performance. Or it is a special type of "realism" peculiar to the contemporary English stage—which amounts to a kind of stylization. It consists in applying quick strokes of stage behavior which will render reality—a sort of theatrical shorthand wherein the necessary dramatic information is strikingly conveyed in the briefest possible time. The effect is to make the calculated results gratifyingly clear, while the human sources of these results are taken for granted—so that the actors' skill is more palpable than his soul, his craft more arresting than the quality or content of his individual experience which has only obliquely been summoned into play.

In its way, *Separate Tables* is perfect. One certainly enjoys it, though inwardly one is barely touched. It

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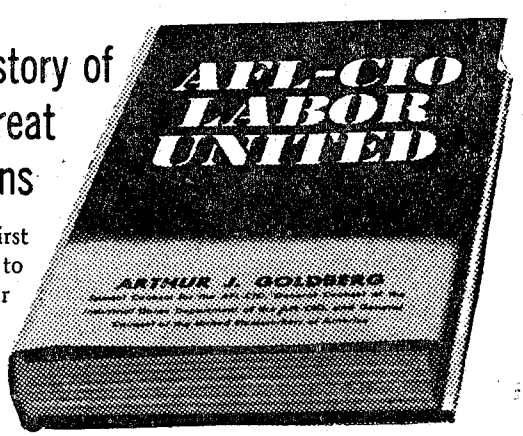

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suffers the limitations of its virtues. For all its gentlemanly understatement, it is too explicit. Everything is too thoroughly defined and articulated because nothing beyond what is definite—which means what is already known—is sought. There is not a blurred moment, a blot of indecision; nothing is unresolved or mysterious. The make is first-rate, but artistic creation is something else again.

FILMS

Robert Hatch

MICHAEL TODD has a touching faith in size. When he puts on a show, his unit of measurement is an elephant and his idea of lavish entertainment is to employ Sir John Gielgud and Frank Sinatra in bit parts. *Around the World in Eighty Days* used more famous actors (some fifty) and covered more ground (by definition) and consumed more sandwich lunches on location (26,391) than any picture in history. It runs for three hours across the enormous curved screen of Todd-AO and thirty-three assistant directors participated in the task of moving 68,984 persons through 2,000 camera set-ups. Man, that's big!

Bulk never fails to impress me; my jaw fairly dropped the first time I saw the Pentagon. But I cannot maintain this uncomfortable expression for anything like 180 minutes. After a relatively short time I began looking for something man-size and lively. In the case of *Around the World* my eye kept falling on David Niven, who is one of the least lively of actors and who succeeds in making a global race against time as unremarkable as a trip to the barber. I recognize that Mr. Niven's imperturbability is the cream of the jest, but there is a monotony about it that I find dramatically catastrophic. How Jules Verne injected suspense into his plot I do not know, but there is no excitement today in the spectacle of a dull but immensely wealthy stick buying his way around the world in the relatively poor time of eleven weeks, three days.

You can make a game of the picture by seeing how often you can beat your neighbor in recognizing the half-forgotten stars that pop up in the yarn. Andy Devine and Victor McLaglen are easy, but you will have to be a little sharper to spot Buster Keaton, Reginald Denny or Gilbert Roland. As a travelogue the picture is curiously unimpressive. Nothing obvious has been omitted and everything close up has been staged, for the reason that the action is supposed to be some eighty years ago and there are few corners of the world

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—ARAGON

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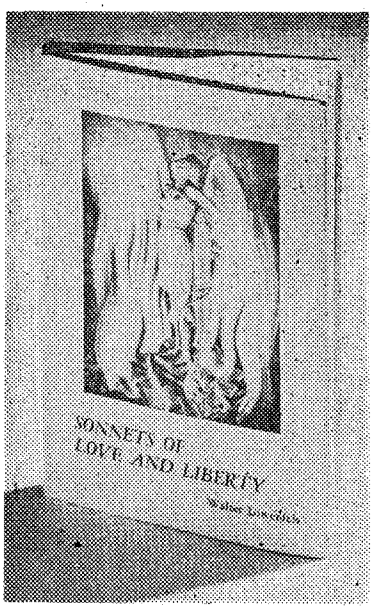

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today where a jeep or a neon sign wouldn't spoil the illusion.

S. J. Perelman, a witty man, wrote the script and his hand is occasionally evident. He was most effective, I thought, in two burlesque melodramas (the rescue of an Oriental beauty from a crowd of religious fanatics and the Sioux ambush of a transcontinental train). But even Mr. Perelman's edge has been blunted by the notions that British aplomb is indefinitely risible and that old gags are preferable to new ones.

The single great contribution of *Around the World* is Cantinflas, a Latin American comedian who here plays servant to David Niven's Phileas Fogg. Cantinflas is possessed of a small, athletic body and an original turn of irony. But, ironically, the colossal and stupendous Todd-erama is the poorest background for his fleet and clever pantomime.

BEFORE HE made *La Strada,* Federico Fellini became famous in Italy for *Vitelloni,* which translates into English as "Big Calves," i.e. overgrown babies. The quality of the picture, and it is very considerable, stems from the group of young actors whom Fellini has directed in a mood of affectionate impatience. With one exception, perhaps, they are not bad—indeed they are quite charming—but they are incorrigibly feckless and God knows what, if anything, will make men of them. The plot is a sketch and one that will not take much analysis, but Fellini's comment is so perceptive, his oafs are so universally familiar and the young actors of his company give out such a variety of distinctive personality that the picture is alive and eventful.

It is a *film* story, which few movies are any more, seeming to improvise as it goes along, seizing on the relevant and revealing shot, modifying its narrative as weather, mood or inspiration suggest. Its form is camera form—the length of a shot, the relation of one shot to another, the contributions which light and motion and fleeting impressions of expression and gesture can make to understanding. Fellini has an opinion of his sorry heroes and that gives his picture cohesion—that and an honest and generous viewpoint on the whole human comedy. Some details of the picture are off balance and I suspect censorship. But this is no time to quibble; what is given is strong and light and completely alive.

THE HERO of *The Snow Was Black* is also a young man with time on his hands. He lives with his mother, who runs a brothel, and this unpropitious environment has made a monster of him. He steals, he murders a man for a whim, he debauches himself (the opportunity is of course convenient); in a peculiarly disagreeable fashion he betrays the trust of the only respectable girl he knows, he apparently kills his old guardian (though I missed this detail in the plot) and he is exceedingly rude to his mother. He is also a Frenchman who hobnobs with the Nazis, but this seems the almost universal practice in his thoroughly supine French town.

All this should be most harrowing, but in fact it is faintly ridiculous. The picture, taken from one of Simenon's psychological novels, is criminal perversity written at the level of a detective thriller. Daniel Gelin, who plays the young man, looks to be an actor of intelligence and some emotional mobility. But he cannot make his abominations seem more than plot shocks, his inner torment more than ranting, or his eventual redemption more than pathos. The picture is seamy but unserious; it is therefore glib and in the end heartless.

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The Dutchman's-Pipe Vine

Thin shoulder swung to debonair
A-thwart his walnut-grained fox-smile,
Clothed in, created of, the usual
Leaves of a usual summer vine
(How strange this green in yellow fall)
And stretched as high, the green man glooms
In vivid, vegetable thought—
Mat rue or thunderous maple heads.

Ten foot's beyond belief. And yet,
To slant-eyed sight that just now flicked
His world, he leaned familiar as
Old August's honest-come-by growths
Or dark-complected men in books.
And conveyed, moreover, a happiness—
As any man intent upon a theme.

Take heart, then. Admire that,
Sombre amongst the yellow leaves
Yet debonair, the very tall
And green man ponders green.

KATHERINE HOSKINS

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MUSIC

B. H. Haggin

IN ADDITION to conducting the Symphony of the Air in the Fromm Foundation concert at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Stokowski conducted it in another program of new works at the opening concert of its series in Carnegie Hall. It was more than fifteen years since I had last seen and heard Stokowski preside over an orchestra in this hall; and remembering those concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra I was struck by the undiminished impressiveness of the operation—of the style which he managed to impart even to his entrance, the quietly authoritative exercise of extraordinary powers with which he led the orchestra through the difficult works and got it to play with the precision, finish and beauty of sound characteristic of his performances. But this operation was about all that the occasion offered. Stokowski has been right in principle in asking the public to be receptive to the new in music; but he has been singularly wrong in practice in his choice of the new music he has asked the public to be receptive to; and this concert was no exception.

It began with Charles Ives's *Robert Browning Overture,* in which quiet passages of impressive sonorities that testified to this composer's musical gifts alternated with pages of noisy chaos that testified to his eccentricity of mind. In the first movement of Alan Hovhaness' Symphony No. 3, Oriental-style melodies were subjected to the unsuitable manipulation and arrangement of classical sonata form; in the finale another of these melodies was repeated endlessly. Endless too was Kurt Leimer's unattractive invention in the sections that succeeded one another without coherence in his Piano Concerto No. 4. As for Werner Egk's *Franzoesiche Suite,* it is "after Rameau" in the sense of giving us the play of Egk's mind set off by Rameau; and in its first two movements that play was anything but engaging in its heaviness and noisiness. In the quiet third movement and brilliant fourth and fifth, however, Egk's mind operated in a way that was arresting and attractive; and they provided the evening's only music of consequence, aside from the Bach chorale-prelude that was added to the program in memory of Philip Sklar, leader of the double-bass section of the NBC Symphony and the Symphony of the Air, who died recently.

I SOLISTI DI ZAGREB, which played at Town Hall recently and is to be heard on Vanguard records, is a Yugoslav string chamber group of the same type and caliber as the Italian Virtuosi di Roma and I Musici. At the Town Hall concert its conductor, the cellist Antonio Janigro, played the fake Boccherini Concerto in B flat, put together and in part composed by Gruetzmacher, which cellists continue to play despite the discovery of the fraud a few years ago and the publication of the genuine work in Eulenburg Edition. Then the group played No. 1 of Rossini's Six Sonatas for two violins, cello and double-bass; and on Vanguard 488 it plays Nos. 1 to 4. Of these only No. 3 was familiar to me from the performances of the Virtuosi and Musici; and the other three turn out to be comparable in charm. Moreover it is astonishing to hear the operatic style of Rossini's maturity so clearly defined in works which he said he composed in his teens. The performances are reproduced with sound in which both treble and bass appear to be overemphasized and must be cut down.

The Mozart Divertimenti K.136, 137 and 138 and the Serenata Notturno K.239 that I Solisti di Zagreb plays on Vanguard 482 have occasional lovely moments, but are not works of much consequence. This is true also of the Divertimenti K.113 and 205 played well by the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra under Marzendorfer on London LL-1427; and the two engaging Minuets K.463 on this record are brief, with contredanses that are less interesting.

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Three of Corelli's Concerti Grossi Op. 6—Nos. 7, 9 and the best known and loveliest, No. 8 *(Christmas)*—which were played brilliantly by the Società Corelli on RCA Victor LM-1776, are now played with better tempos and greater refinement of tone and style by I Musici on Epic LC-3264. The Victor record had in addition Nos. 1 and 2; the Epic has Nos. 4 and 10.

PIERLOT'S tone is remarkably beautiful in the performance of Vivaldi's fine Oboe Concerto in D minor (Pincherla No. 259) on London TWV-91052, but the playing of the instrumental group under Jean Witold hasn't the refinement of sonority and phrasing of the earlier Virtuosi di Roma performance on Decca 9679. The London record also offers Vivaldi's engaging Concerto in B flat for two violins (P. 391), Concerto in D for two violins and two cellos (P.188) and Bassoon Concerto in E minor (P.137), with excellent performances by the various soloists.

As for standard repertory, Reiner's performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony with the Chicago Symphony on Victor LM-1991 is good except for the unsteadiness of tempo in the finale; but Munch's performance of Beethoven's *Pastoral* with the Boston Symphony on Victor LM-1997 is poorly paced, unclear in texture and without sensitiveness, grace and warmth. And the poorly recorded performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 by Casadesus with the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos on Columbia ML-5100 also is something to skip.

Szell's performances of Dvorak's *Slavonic Dances* with the Cleveland Orchestra in Epic SC-6015 are effective but don't have the subtleties of rhythm and phrasing and the more beautiful orchestral sonorities of Kubelik's performances with the Vienna Philharmonic on London LL-1283/4.

TELEVISION NEXT WEEK

November 11 through November 15
(See local papers for time and channel)

Sunday, November 11

AIR POWER (CBS). First chapter of a 26-part series on the development of flight and its impact on the twentieth century. The opening program (scheduled with brilliant irony on Armistice Day) will be a simulated nuclear attack on America. Subsequent programs, produced by CBS Public Affairs in cooperation with the U. S. Air Force, are constructed from 330 million feet of film gathered from all over the world. The series covers civilian developments as well as the military, but the Air Force will obviously get its money's worth. Two years in the making, it is rumored to be CBS's answer to "Victory at NBC."

JOHNS HOPKINS FILE 7 (ABC). A new series devoted to current research in science, the humanities and the arts from a university that has already established itself on TV with such intelligent shows as "Johns Hopkins Science Review" and "Tomorrow's Careers." The first program of the newcomer, "Stress," deals with brain-washing.

Monday, November 12

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (NBC; Producers' Showcase). A 90-minute musical based on the fairytale: book and lyrics by Helen Deutsch, music by Jerry Livingston. With Celeste Holm, Cyril Ritchard, Arnold Stang and Joel Gray in the title role. (Color).

THE PILOT (CBS; Studio 1). Postponed from October 8 because of Margaret Sullavan's defection, this original teleplay will now star Nancy Kelly. It tells of the first nun to get an airplane pilot's license.

Thursday, November 15

SAVROLA (NBC; Matinee Theatre). Another postponement, this time because of author trouble. Winston Churchill, who earlier confessed only a distant interest in the televised version of his one novel, at the last moment interrupted his present writing schedule to inject "more Churchill, less Hollywood" into the adaptation. Sarah Churchill stars.

HERITAGE OF ANGER (CBS; Playhouse 90). Third original 90-minute drama in this trail-blazing series, which made a big splash with "Requiem for a Heavyweight." The present show, starring Ralph Bellamy and Nina Foch, is the story of a business leader who resolves to turn his empire over to his two sons. Worth watching for new developments in television drama.

Radio

Wednesday, November 14

POETS AND OTHER PEOPLE (NBC). The pleasures of hearing the well-spoken word; a six-week series produced in cooperation with Columbia University's Institute of Arts and Sciences. On this occasion, "An Evening with Siobhan McKenna."

A W. L.

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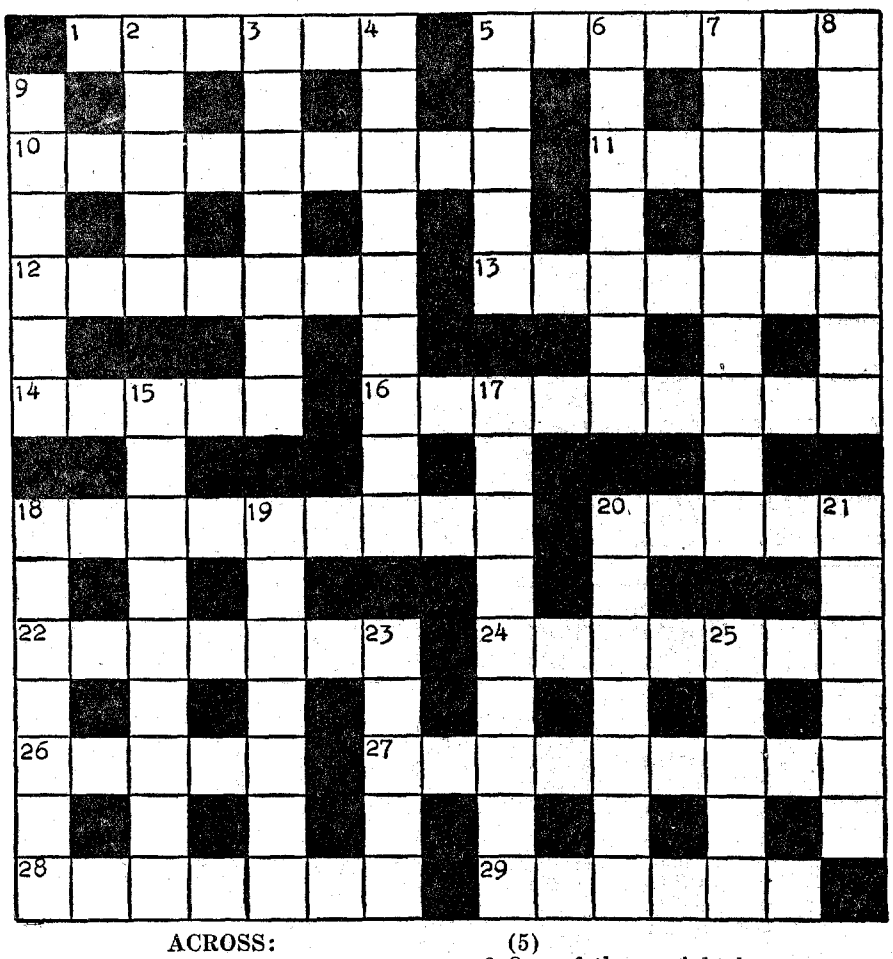
Crossword Puzzle No. 697

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 March might show whether you can keep this in front of your ankle. (6)
5 Spend your years in reading, perhaps. (7)
10 Suggests whence a Russian might come is certainly not 1. (3, 2, 4)
11 See 4 down
12 Supplicate. (7)
13. There's purpose in what some people have to pay for clothing. (7)
14 and 20 down This sometimes takes perception (when dealing with marked cards, perhaps). (12)
16 Black and white, for example. (9)
18 Sounds like what victims of delirium might do, but they're real. (3, 6)
20 Sunny? (5)
22 Medusa's affected by it. (7)
24 Get sick after a quantity of duck. (7)
26 Pick up the remains of 18 down finally. (5)
27 This might be 29 too much. (9)
28 Enter at 12. (7)
29 This might be proverbial. (6)

DOWN:

2 Not the end of 16, as one observes. (5)
3 Ate up most of the stick above it, with material results. (7)
4 and 11 across This is deemed crazy by some, but it might be quite a spread. (9, 5)
5 Father obviously gets through it! (5)
6 One of these might be synonymous with 18 down. (7)
7 Referring to support, name it incorrectly in everything. (9)
8 Clergy, nobles, and commons. (Press for an addition, if you need more!) (7)
9 This is a weak point with some of us. (6)
15 An uneasy seat there might have checked what was in the 5 down. (4, 5)
17 Even coastal steamers are bound to occasionally, but they might make traveling easier. (9)
18 The boss is a little bit attached to dress. (7)
19 The runner belongs to me in a bad one. (7)
20 See 14 across
21 A bricklayer sometimes does—a hen, never. (6)
23 With duffers, one is sometimes almost unreplaceable. (5)
25 Like a Scotsman, only from a different country. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 696:
ACROSS: 1 STRANGULATION; 10 AND 13 LORNA DOONE; 11 LIBERATOR; 12 DISSENTER; 14 DEPARTMENTAL; 19 SKITTISHNESS; 22 RAGED; 24 FLOGGINGS; 25 CHARIVARI 26 IRENE 27 DERMATOLOGIST. DOWN: 2 THRUST; 3 ABASEMENT; 4 GALATIANS; 5 LABOR; 6 TIRED; 7 OUTPOSTS; 8 BLADE; 9 ORDEALS; 15 TONSORIAL 16 EASY-GOING; 17 OSTRICH; 18 DISGRACE; 20 UNLESS; 21 USHER; 23 DEISM; 24 FEAST.

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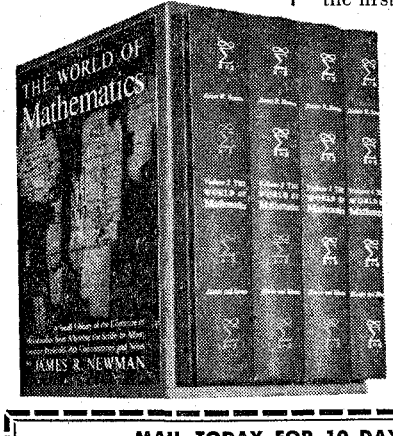

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